

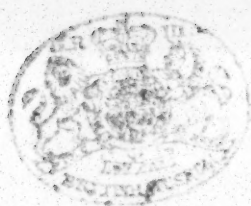
THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS.
WITH
PREFACES,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

VOLUME THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

L O N D O N :

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THE
THIRTY-SEVENTH VOLUME
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS;
CONTAINING
THE SECOND PART OF
G A Y.

VOL. XXXVII. a

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P O E M S
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J O H N G A Y.

VOL. XXXVII.

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By MR. G A Y.

T A L E S.

A N A N S W E R

TO THE SOMPNER'S PROLOGUE OF CHAUCER.

IN IMITATION OF CHAUCER'S STYLE.

THE Sompner leudly hath his prologue told,
 And faine on the Freers his tale japing and bold;
 How that in Hell they searchen near and wide,
 And ne one Freer in all thilke place espyde:
 But lo! the devil turn'd his erse about,
 And twenty thousand Freers wend in and out.
 By which in Jeoffry's rhyming it appears,
 The devil's belly is the hive of Freers.
 Now listneth lordings! forthwith ye shall hear,
 What happen'd at a house in Lancashire.
 A misere that had londs and tenement,
 Who raketh from his villaines taxes and rent,

Owne'd a house which empty long ystood,
Full deeply sited in a derkning wood;
Murmring a shallow brook runneth along,
Mong the round stones it maken doleful song.

Now there spreaden a rumour that everich night
The rooms yhaunted been by many a sprite;
The miller avoucheth, and all thereabout,
That they full oft' hearken the hellish rout;
Some saine they hear the jingling of chains,
And some hath yheard the psautries straines;
At midnight some the heedless horse ymeet,
And some espie a corse in a white sheet,
And oother things, faye, elfin, and else,
And shapes that fear createn to itselfe.

Now it so hapt, there was not ferre away,
Of grey Freers a fair and rich Abbaye,
Where liven a Freer ycleped Pere Thomas,
Who daren alone in derke through church-yerds pass.

This Freer would lye in thilke house all night,
In hope he might espyen a dreadful sprite.
He taketh candle, beades, and holy watere,
And legends eke of Saintes, and bookes of prayere.
He entereth the room, and looketh round about,
And haspen the door, to haspen the goblin out.
The candle hath he put close by the bed,
And in low tone his *ave marye* said.
With water now besprinkled hath the floore,
And maken cross on key-hole of the doore.
Ne was there not a mouse-hole in thilke place,
But he ycrossed hath by God his grace:

He

He crossed hath this, and eke he crossed that,
With *benedicite* and God knows what.

Now he goeth to bed and lieth adown,
When the clock had just stricken the twelfth soun.
Bethinketh him now what the cause had ybeen,
Why many sprites by mortals have been seen.
Hem remembreth how Dan Plutarch hath ysed
That Cæsar's sprite came to Brute his bed;
Of chains that frighten erst Artemidore,
The tales of Pline, Valere, and many more.

Hem thinketh that some murdere here been done,
And he mought see some bloodye ghost anone,
Or that some orphlines writings here be stor'd,
Or pot of gold laine deep beneath a board:
Or thinketh hem, if he might see no sprite,
The Abbaye mought buy this house cheap outright.

As hem thus thinketh, anone asleep he lies,
Up starten Sathanas with saucer eyes.
He turned the Freer upon his face downright,
Displaying his nether cheeks full broad and white.
Then quoth Dan Sathanas as he thwacked him sore,
Thou didst forget to guard thy postern-dore.
There is an hole which hath not crossed been:
Farewel, from whence I came, I creepen in.

Now plain it is ytellen in my verse,
If Devils in hell bear Freers in their erse,
On earth the Devil in Freers doth ydwell;
Were there no Freers, the Devil mought keep in Hells.

WORK FOR A COOPER.

A T A L E.

A MAN may lead a happy life,
 Without that needful thing a wife :
 This long have lusty Abbots known,
 Who ne'er knew spouses---of their own.

What though your house be clean and neat,
 With couches, chairs, and beds compleat ;
 Though you each day invite a friend,
 Though he should every dish commend ;
 On Bagshot-heath your mutton fed,
 Your fowls at Brentford born and bred ;
 Though purest wine your cellars boast,
 Wine worthy of the fairest toast ;
 Yet there are other things requir'd :
 Ring, and let 's see the maid you hir'd.—
 Bless me ! those hands might hold a broom,
 Twirl round a mop, and wash a room :
 A batchelor his maid should keep,
 Not for that servile use to sweep ;
 Let her his humour understand,
 And turn to every thing her hand.
 Get you a lass that 's young and tight,
 Whose arms are, like her apron, white.
 What though her shift be seldom seen,
 Let that, though coarse, be always clean ;
 She might each morn your tea attend,
 And on your wrist your ruffle mend ;

Then,

T A L E S.

7

Then, if you break a roguish jest,
Or squeeze her hand, or pat her breast,
She cries, Oh, dear Sir, don't be naught !
And blushes speak her last night's fault.
To her your household cares confide,
Let your keys jingle at her side.
A footman's blunders tease and fret ye ;
Ev'n while you chide, you smile on Betty.
Discharge him then, if he 's too spruce ;
For Betty 's for his master's use.

Will you your amorous fancy baulk,
For fear some prudish neighbour talk ?
But you 'll object, that you 're afraid
Of the pert freedoms of a maid.
Besides, your wiser heads will say,
That she who turns her hand this way,
From one vice to another drawn,
Will lodge your silver-spoons in pawn.
Has not the homely wrinkled jade
More need to learn the pilfering trade ?
For love all Betty's wants supplies,
Laces her shoes, her manteau dyes,
All her stuff-suits she flings away,
And wears thread-sattin every day.

Who then a dirty drab would hire,
Brown as the hearth of kitchen-fire ;
When all must own, were Betty put
To the black duties of the slut,
As well she scours or scrubs a floor,
And still is good for something more ?

Thus, to avoid the greater vice,
I knew a Priest, of conscience nice,
To quell his lust for neighbour's spouse,
Keep fornication in his house.

But you 're impatient all this time,
Fret at my counsel, curse my rhyme.
Be satisfy'd: I 'll talk no more,
For thus my tale begins—Of yore
There dwelt at Blois a Priest full fair,
With rolling eye and crisped hair;
His chin hung low, his brow was sleek,
Plenty lay basking on his cheek;
Whole days at cloyster-grates he fate,
Ogled, and talk'd of this and that
So feelingly, the Nuns lamented
That double-bars were e'er invented.
If he the wanton wife confest,
With downcast eye, and heaving breast;
He stroak'd her cheek to still her fear,
And talk'd of sins *en cavalier*;
Each time enjoin'd her penance mild,
And fondled on her like his child.
At every jovial gossip's feast
Pere Bernard was a welcome guest;
Mirth suffer'd not the least restraint,
He could at will shake off the saint;
Nor frown'd he when they freely spoke,
But shook his fides, and took the joke;
Nor fail'd he to promote the jest,
And shar'd the sins which they confest.

Yet,

Yet, that he might not always roam,
He kept conveniencies at home.
His maid was in the bloom of beauty,
Well-limb'd for every social duty;
He meddled with no household cares,
'To her consign'd his whole affairs :
She of his study kept the keys,
For he was studious—of his ease :
She had the power of all his locks,
Could rummage every chest and box ;
Her honesty such credit gain'd,
Not ev'n the cellar was restrain'd.

In troth it was a goodly show,
Lin'd with full hogsheds all a-row.
One vessel, from the rank remov'd,
Far dearer than the rest he lov'd ;
Pour la bonne bouche 'twas set aside,
To all but choicest friends deny'd.
He now and then would send a quart,
To warm some wife's retentive heart,
Against confession's fullen hour :
Wine has all secrets in its power.
At common feasts it had been waste,
Nor was it fit for layman's taste.
If monk or friar were his guest,
They drank it ; for they know the best.
Nay, he at length so fond was grown,
He always drank it when—alone.

Who shall recount his civil labours,
In pious visits to his neighbours ?

Whene'er

Whene'r weak husbands went astray,
 He guess'd their wives were in the way :
 'Twas then his charity was shown,
 He chose to see them when alone.

Now was he bent on cuckoldom :
 He knew friend Dennis was from home :
 His wife (a poor neglected beauty,
 Defrauded of a husband's duty)
 Had often told him at confession,
 How hard she struggled 'gainst transgression.
 He now resolves, in heat of blood,
 To try how firm her virtue stood.
 He knew that wine (to love best aid)
 Has oft' made bold the shame-fac'd maid,
 Taught her to romp, and take more freedoms,
 Than nymphs train'd-up at Smith's or Needham's.

A mighty bottle strait he chose,
 Such as might give two Friars their dose.
 Nannette he call'd : the cellar-door
 She straight unlocks, descends before ;
 He follow'd close. But when he spies
 His favourite cask ; with lifted eyes
 And lifted hands aloud he cries,
 Heigh-day ! my darling wine astoop !
 It must alas ! have sprung a hoop.
 That there 's a leak is past all doubt,
 (Reply'd the maid)—I'll find it out.
 She sets the candle down in haste,
 Tucks her white apron round her waist.

The

The hoghead's mouldy fide ascends ;
She straddles wide, and downward bends :
So low she stoops to seek the flaw,
Her coats rose up, her master saw—
I see—he cries—(then claspt her fast)
The leak through which my wine has past.

Then all in haste the maid descended,
And in a trice the leak was mended.
He found in Nannette all he wanted,
So Dennis' brows remain'd unplanted.

Ere since this time, all lusty Friars
(Warm'd with predominant desires,
Whene'er the flesh with spirit quarrels)
Look on the sex as leaky barrels.
Beware of these, ye jealous spouses !
From such-like coopers guard your houses ;
For, if they find not work at home,
For jobbs through all the town they roam.

THE EQUIVOCATION.

A T A L E.

AN Abbot rich (whose taste was good
 Alike in science and in food)
 His Bishop had resolv'd to treat;
 The Bishop came, the Bishop eat.
 'Twas silence, till their stomachs fail'd;
 And now at Hereticks they rail'd.
 What Heresy (the Prelate said)
 Is in that Church where Priests may wed!
 Do not we take the Church for life?
 But those divorce her for a wife;
 Like laymen, keep her in their houses,
 And own the children of their spouses.
 Vile practices! the Abbot cry'd,
 For pious use we 're set aside!
 Shall we take wives? Marriage at best
 Is but carnality profess!

Now, as the Bishop took his glass,
 He spy'd our Abbot's buxom lass,
 Who cross'd the room; he mark'd her eye
 That glow'd with love; his pulse beat high.
 Fye, father, fye, (the Prelate cries)
 A maid so young! for shame, be wise.
 These indiscretions lend a handle
 To lewd lay-tongues, to give us scandal.

For

For your vow's sake, this rule I give t' ye ;
Let all your maids be turn'd of fifty.

The Priest reply'd, I have not swerv'd,
But your chaste precept well observ'd :
That las full twenty-five has told ;
I 've yet another who 's as old ;
Into one sum their ages cast ;
So both my maids have fifty past.

The Prelate smil'd, but durst not blame ;
For why ? his Lordship did the same.

Let those who reprimand their brothers,
First mend the faults they find in others.

A TRUE STORY
OF AN
APPARITION.

SCEPTICKS (whose strength of argument makes out,
 That wisdom's deep enquiries end in doubt)
 Hold this assertion positive and clear,
 That sprites are pure delusions, rais'd by fear.
 Not that fam'd ghost, which in presaging sound
 Call'd Brutus to Philippi's fatal ground,
 Nor can Tiberius Gracchus' goary shade,
 These ever-doubting disputants persuade.
 Straight they with smiles reply, Those tales of old
 By visionary priests were made and told.
 Oh, might some ghost at dead of night appear,
 And make you own conviction by your fear!
 I know your sneers my easy faith accuse,
 Which with such idle legends scares the Muse:
 But think not that I tell those vulgar sprites,
 Which frighted boys relate on winter nights,
 How cleanly milk-maids meet the fairy train,
 How heedless horses drag the clinking chain,
 Night-roaming ghosts, by faucer eye-balls known,
 The common spectres of each country-town.
 No, I such fables can like you despise,
 And laugh to hear these nurse-invented lies.
 Yet has not oft' the fraudulent guardian's fright
 Compell'd him to restore an orphan's right?

And

And can we doubt that horrid ghosts ascend,
Which on the conscious murderer's steps attend?
Hear then, and let attested truth prevail;
From faithful lips I learnt the dreadful tale.

Where Arden's forest spreads its limits wide,
Whose branching paths the doubtful road divide,
A traveller took his solitary way,
When low beneath the hills was sunk the day.
And now the skies with gathering darkness lour,
The branches rustle with the threaten'd shower;
With sudden blasts the forest murmurs loud,
Indented lightnings cleave the sable cloud,
Thunder on thunder breaks, the tempest roars,
And heaven discharges all its watery stores.
The wandering traveller shelter seeks in vain,
And shrinks and shivers with the beating rain:
On his steed's neck the slacken'd bridle lay,
Who chose with cautious step th' uncertain way;
And now he checks the rein, and halts to hear
If any noise foretold a village near.

At length from far a stream of light he sees
Extend its level ray between the trees;
Thither he speeds, and, as he nearer came,
Joyful he knew the lamp's domestic flame
That trembled through the window; cross the way
Darts forth the barking cur, and stands at bay.

It was an antient lonely house, that stood
Upon the borders of the spacious wood;
Here towers and antique battlements arise,
And there in heaps the moulder'd ruin lies.

Some

Some Lord this mansion held in days of yore,
To chace the wolf, and pierce the foaming boar :
How chang'd, alas, from what it once had been !
'Tis now degraded to a public inn.

Straight he dismounts, repeats his loud commands :
Swift at the gate the ready landlord stands ;
With frequent cringe he bows, and begs excuse,
His house was full, and every bed in use.
What not a garret, and no straw to spare ?
Why then the kitchen-fire and elbow-chair
Shall serve for once to nod away the night.
The kitchen ever is the servant's right,
Replies the host ; there, all the fire around,
The Count's tir'd footmen snore upon the ground.

The maid, who listen'd to this whole debate,
With pity learnt the weary stranger's fate.
Be brave, she cries, you still may be our guest ;
Our haunted room was ever held the best :
If then your valour can the fright sustain
Of rattling curtains and the clinking chain ;
If your courageous tongue have power to talk,
When round your bed the horrid ghost shall walk ;
If you dare ask it, why it leaves its tomb ;
I'll see your sheets well air'd, and shew the room.
Soon as the frightened maid her tale had told,
'The stranger enter'd, for his heart was bold.

The damsel led him through a spacious hall,
Where ivy hung the half-demolish'd wall :
She frequent look'd behind, and chang'd her hue,
While fancy tipt the candle's flame with blue.

And

And now they gain'd the winding stairs' ascent,
And to the lonesome room of terrors went.
When all was ready, swift retir'd the maid,
The watch-lights burn, tuck'd warm in bed was laid
The hardy stranger, and attends the sprite
Till his accustom'd walk at dead of night.

At first he hears the wind with hollow roar
Shake the loose lock, and swing the creaking door;
Nearer and nearer draws the dreadful sound
Of rattling chains, that dragg'd upon the ground:
When lo, the spectre came with horrid stride,
Approach'd the bed, and drew the curtains wide!
In human form the ghastful phantom stood,
Expos'd his mangled bosom dy'd with blood.
Then, silent pointing to his wounded breast,
Thrice wav'd his hand. Beneath the frightened guest
The bed-cords trembled, and with shuddering fear,
Sweat chill'd his limbs, high rose his bristled hair;
Then muttering hasty prayers, he mann'd his heart,
And cry'd aloud; Say, whence and who thou art?
The stalking ghost with hollow voice replies,
Three years are counted since with mortal eyes
I saw the sun, and vital air respir'd.
Like thee benighted, and with travel tir'd,
Within these walls I slept. O thirst of gain!
See, still the planks the bloody mark retain.
Stretch'd on this very bed, from sleep I start,
And see the steel impending o'er my heart;
The barbarous hostess held the lifted knife,
The floor ran purple with my gushing life.

My treasure now they seize, the golden spoil
They bury deep beneath the grass-grown soil,
Far in the common field. Be bold, arise,
My steps shall lead thee to the secret prize ;
There dig and find ; let that thy care reward :
Call loud on justice, bid her not retard
To punish murder ; lay my ghost at rest :
So shall with peace secure thy nights be blest ;
And, when beneath these boards my bones are found,
Decent inter them in some sacred ground.

Here ceas'd the ghost. The stranger springs from bed,
And boldly follows where the phantom led :
The half-worn stony stairs they now descend,
Where passages obscure their arches bend.
Silent they walk ; and now through groves they pass,
Now through wet meads their steps imprint the grass.
At length amidst a spacious field they came :
There stops the spectre, and ascends in flame.
Amaz'd he stood, no bush or brier was found,
To teach his morning search to find the ground.
What could he do ? the night was hideous dark,
Fear shook his joints, and nature dropt the mark :
With that he starting wak'd, and rais'd his head,
But found the golden mark was left in bed.

What is the statesman's vast ambitious scheme,
But a short vision and a golden dream ?
Power, wealth, and title, elevate his hope ;
He wakes : but, for a garter, finds a rope.

T H E

M A D - D O G.

A T A L E.

A PRUDE, at morn and evening prayer,
 Had worn her velvet-cushion bare ;
 Upward she taught her eyes to roll,
 As if she watch'd her soaring soul ;
 And, when devotion warm'd the croud,
 None sung, or smote their breast so loud :
 Pale Penitence had mark'd her face
 With all the meagre signs of grace.
 Her mass-book was compleatly lin'd
 With painted Saints of various kind :
 But, when in every page she view'd
 Fine Ladies who the flesh subdu'd,
 As quick her beads she counted o'er,
 She cry'd—Such wonders are no more !
 She chose not to delay confession,
 To bear at once a year's transgression ;
 But every week set all things even,
 And balanc'd her accounts with Heaven.
 Behold her now in humble guise,
 Upon her knees with down-cast eyes

Before the Priest: she thus begins,
 And, sobbing, blubbers-forth her sins:
 "Who could that tempting man resist;
 "My virtue languish'd, as he kiss'd;
 "I strove — till I could strive no longer:
 "How can the weak subdue the stronger?"

The Father ask'd her where and when?
 How many? and what sort of men?
 By what degrees her blood was heated?
 How oft' the frailty was repeated?
 Thus have I seen a pregnant wench
 All flush'd with guilt before the bench:
 The Judges (wak'd by wanton thought)
 Dive to the bottom of her fault;
 They leer, they simper at her shame,
 And make her call all things by name.

And now to sentence he proceeds,
 Prescribes how oft' to tell her beads;
 Shews her what Saints could do her good,
 Doubles her fasts, to cool her blood,
 Eas'd of her sins, and light as air,
 Away she trips, perhaps to prayer.
 'Twas no such thing. Why then this haste?
 The clock has struck, the hour is past;
 And, on the spur of inclination,
 She scorn'd to bilk her assignation.

Whate'er she did, next week she came,
 And piously confess the same.

The

The Priest, who female frailties pity'd,
First chid her, then her sins remitted.

But did she now her crime bemoan
In penitential sheets alone?
And was no bold, no beastly fellow
The nightly partner of her pillow?
No, none: for next time in the grove
A bank was conscious of her love.

Confession-day was come about,
And now again it all must out.
She seems to wipe her twinkling eyes:

“What now, my child?” the Father cries.

“Again!” says she.—With threatening looks,
He thus the prostrate dame rebukes:

“Madam, I grant there's something in it;
“That virtue has th' unguarded minute;
“But pray now tell me what are whores,
“But women of unguarded hours?
“Then you must sure have lost all shame.
“What! every day, and still the same,
“And no fault else! 'tis strange to find
“A woman to one sin confin'd!
“Pride is this day her darling passion,
“The next day Slander is in fashion;
“Gaming succeeds; if Fortune crosses,
“Then Virtue's mortgag'd for her losses;
“By use her favourite vice she loaths,
“And loves new follies like new cloaths:
“But you, beyond all thought unchaste,
“Have all sin center'd near your waist!

" Whence is this appetite so strong ?
 " Say, Madam, did your mother long ?
 " Or is it luxury and high diet
 " That won't let virtue sleep in quiet ?"
 She tells him now, with meekest voice,
 That she had never err'd by choice ;
 Nor was there known a virgin chaster,
 Till ruin'd by a sad disaster.

That she a favourite lap-dog had,
 Which (as she stroak'd and kiss'd) grew mad ;
 And on her lip a wound indenting,
 First set her youthful blood fermenting.

The Priest reply'd, with zealous fury,
 " You should have sought the means to cure ye,
 " Doctors by various ways, we find,
 " Treat these distempers of the mind.
 " Let gaudy ribbands be deny'd
 " To her who raves with scornful pride ;
 " And, if religion crack her notions,
 " Lock-up her volumes of devotions ;
 " But, if for man her rage prevail,
 " Bar her the sight of creatures male.
 " Or else, to cure such venom'd bites,
 " And set the shatter'd thoughts arights ;
 " They send you to the ocean's shore,
 " And plunge the patient o'er and o'er."

The dame reply'd, " Alas ! in vain
 " My kindred forc'd me to the main ;
 " Naked, and in the face of day :
 " Look not, ye fishermen, this way !

" What

" What virgin had not done as I did ?
 " My modest hand, by nature guided,
 " Debarr'd at once from human eyes
 " The feat where female honour lies ;
 " And, though thrice dipt from top to toe,
 " I still secur'd the post below,
 " And guarded it with grasp so fast
 " Not one drop through my fingers past.
 " Thus owe I to my bashful care,
 " That all the rage is settled there."

Weigh well the projects of mankind ;
 Then tell me, Reader, canst thou find
 The man from madness wholly free ?
 They all are mad — save you and me,
 Do not the statesman, fop, and wit,
 By daily follies prove they 're bit ?
 And, when the briny cure they try'd,
 Some part still kept above the tide ?

Some men (when drench'd beneath the wave)
 High o'er their heads their fingers save :
 Those hands by mean extortion thrive,
 Or in the pocket lightly dive :
 Or, more expert in pilfering vice,
 They burn and itch to cog the dice.

Plunge-in a courtier ; strait his fears
 Direct his hands to stop his ears.
 And now truth seems a grating noise,
 He loves the slanderer's whispering voice ;

He hangs on flattery with delight,
And thinks all fulsome praise is right.
All women dread a watery death :
They shut their lips, to hold their breath ;
And, though you duck them ne'er so long,
Not one salt drop e'er wets their tongue :
'Tis hence they scandal have at will,
And that this member ne'er lies still.

T H E
Q U I D N U N K I ' S :

A
T A L E.

O C C A S I O N E D.

By the DEATH of the DUKE REGENT of FRANCE:

HOW vain are mortal man's endeavours ?
 (said, at dame Elliot's *, master Travers.)
 Good Orleans dead ! in truth 'tis hard :
 Oh, may all statesmen die prepar'd !
 I do foresee (and for fore-seeing 5
 He equals any man in being)
 The army ne'er can be disbanded.
 — I wish the King were safely landed.
 Ah, friends ! great changes threat the land ;
 All France and England at a stand ! 10
 There 's Meroweis --- mark ! strange work !
 And there 's the Czar, and there 's the Turk ;
 The Pope --- An India merchant by,
 Cut short the speech with this reply :
 “ *All* at a stand ? You see great changes ? 15
 “ Ah, Sir ! you never saw the Ganges.
 “ There dwell the nations of Quidnunki's
 “ (So Monomotapa calls monkies) :

“ On

* A coffee-house near St. James's.

- " On their bank, from bough to bough,
 " They meet and chat (as we may now). 20
 " Whispers go round, they grin, they shrug,
 " They bow, they snarl, they scratch, they hug;
 " And, just as chance or whim provoke them,
 " They either bite their friends, or stroke them.
 " There have I seen some active prig, 25
 " To shew his parts, bestride a twig :
 " Lord ! how the chattering tribe admire,
 " Not that he 's wiser, but he 's higher :
 " All long to try the venturous thing
 " (For power is but to have one's swing) ; 30
 " From side to side he springs, he spurns,
 " And bangs his foes and friends by turns.
 " Thus, as in giddy freaks he bounces,
 " Crack goes the twig, and in he flounces !
 " Down the swift stream the wretch is borne ; 35
 " Never, ah never, to return !
 " Zounds ! what a fall had our dear brother ;
 " Morbleu ! cries one ; and Damme ! t'other.
 " The nations give a general screech ;
 " None cocks his tail, none claws his breech ; 40
 " Each trembles for the public weal,
 " And for a while forgets to steal.
 " A while, all eyes, intent and steddy,
 " Pursue him, whirling down the eddy.
 " But, out of mind when out of view, 45
 " Some other mounts the twig anew ;
 " And business, on each monkey-shore,
 " Runs the same track it went before."

F A B L E S.

I N T W O P A R T S.

- “ Shall not my Fables censure vice,
 “ Because a knave is over-nice ? —
 “ If I lash vice in general fiction,
 “ Is ’t I apply, or self-conviction ?
 “ Brutes are my theme. Am I to blame,
 “ If men in morals are the same ?
 “ I no man call or ape or ass ;
 “ ’Tis his own conscience holds the glass.
 “ Thus void of all offence I write :
 “ Who claims the Fable, knows his right.”

PROL. TO SHEP. WEEK.

I N T R O D U C T I O N T O T H E F A B L E S.

P A R T T H E F I R S T,

T H E S H E P H E R D A N D T H E P H I L O S O P H E R.

R E M O T E from cities liv’d a Swain,
 Unvex’d with all the cares of gain ;
 His head was silver’d o’er with age,
 And long experience made him sage ;

In

In summer's heat, and winter's cold, 5
 He fed his flock, and penn'd the fold;
 His hours in cheerful labour flew,
 Nor envy nor ambition knew;
 His wisdom and his honest fame

Through all the country rais'd his name 10

A deep Philosopher (whose rules
 Of moral life were drawn from schools)
 The Shepherd's homely cottage sought,
 And thus explor'd his reach of thought.

Whence is thy learning? hath thy toil 15
 O'er books consum'd the midnight oil?
 Hast thou old Greece and Rome survey'd,
 And the vast sense of Plato weigh'd?
 Hath Socrates thy soul refin'd,
 And hast thou fathom'd Tully's mind? 20

Or, like the wise Ulysses, thrown,
 By various fates, on realms unknown,
 Hast thou through many cities stray'd,
 Their customs, laws, and manners, weigh'd?

The shepherd modestly reply'd, 25

I ne'er the paths of learning try'd;
 Nor have I roam'd in foreign parts,
 To read mankind, their laws and arts;
 For man is practis'd in disguise,

He cheats the most discerning eyes: 30

Who by that search shall wiser grow,
 When we ourselves can never know?
 The little knowledge I have gain'd,
 Was all from simple Nature drain'd;

Hence

Hence my life's maxims took their rise, 35

Hence grew my settled hate to vice.

The daily labours of the bee

Awake my soul to industry :

Who can observe the careful ant,

And not provide for future want ? 40

My dog (the truest of his kind)

With gratitude inflames my mind :

I mark his true, his faithful way,

And in my service copy Tray.

In constancy and nuptial love, 45

I learn my duty from the dove.

The hen, who from the chilly air,

With pious wing, protects her care,

And every fowl that flies at large,

Instructs me in a parent's charge. 50

From Nature, too, I take my rule,

To shun contempt and ridicule.

I never, with important air,

In conversation overbear.

Can grave and formal pass for wise, 55

When men the solemn owl despise ?

My tongue within my lips I rein ;

For who talks much must talk in vain.

We from the wordy torrent fly :

Who listens to the chattering pye ? 60

Nor would I, with felonious flight,

By stealth invade my neighbour's right.

Rapacious animals we hate :

Kites, hawks, and wolves, deserve their fate.

Do

Do not we just abhorrence find 65
Against the toad and serpent-kind ?
But Envy, Calumny, and Spite,
Bear stronger venom in their bite.
Thus every object of creation
Can furnish hints to contemplation ; 70
And, from the most minute and mean,
A virtuous mind can morals glean.
Thy fame is just, the Sage replies ;
Thy virtue proves thee truly wise.
Pride often guides the author's pen ; 75
Books as affected are as men :
But he who studies Nature's laws,
From certain truth his maxims draws ;
And those, without our schools, suffice
To make men moral, good, and wise. 80

TO HIS HIGHNESS.

WILLIAM DUKE OF CUMBERLAND.

F A B L E I.

THE LION, THE TYGER, AND THE TRAVELLER.

ACCCEPT, young Prince! the moral lay,
 And in these TALES mankind survey;
 With early virtues plant your breast,
 The specious arts of vice detest.

Princes, like beauties, from their youth 5
 Are strangers to the voice of Truth.

Learn to condemn all praise betimes,
 For flattery's the nurse of crimes:
 Friendship by sweet reproof is shown
 (A virtue never near a throne): 10

In courts such freedom must offend;
 There none presumes to be a friend.
 To those of your exalted station,
 Each courtier is a dedication.

Must I, too, flatter like the rest, 15
 And turn my morals to a jest?

The Muse disdains to steal from those
 Who thrive in courts by fulsome prose.

But shall I hide your real praise,
 Or tell you what a nation says? 20

They in your infant bosom trace
 The virtues of your royal race;

In

In the fair dawning of your mind,
Discern you generous, mild, and kind :
They see you grieve to hear distress, 25
And pant already to redress.

Go on, the height of good attain,
Nor let a nation hope in vain :
For hence we justly may presage
The virtues of a riper age. 30

True courage shall your bosom fire,
And future actions own your fire.
Cowards are cruel ; but the brave
Love mercy, and delight to save.

A Tyger, roaming for his prey, 35
Sprung on a Traveller in the way ;
The prostrate game a Lion spies,
And on the greedy tyrant flies :
With mingled roar resounds the wood,
Their teeth, their claws, distil with blood ; 40
Till, vanquish'd by the Lion's strength,
The spotted Foe extends his length.
The Man besought the shaggy Lord,
And on his knees for life implor'd.
His life the generous hero gave. 45
Together walking to his cave,
The Lion thus bespoke his guest :

“ What hardy beast shall dare contest
“ My matchless strength ? You saw the fight,
“ And must attest my power and right. 50
“ Forc'd to forego their native home,
“ My starving slaves at distance roam.

“ Within

- “ Within these woods I reign alone ;
“ The boundless forest is my own.
“ Bears, wolves, and all the savage brood, 55
“ Have dy’d the regal den with blood.
“ These carcases on either hand,
“ Those bones that whiten all the land,
“ My former deeds and triumphs tell,
“ Beneath these jaws what numbers fell.” 60
“ True,” says the Man, “ the strength I saw
“ Might well the brutal nation awe ;
“ But shall a monarch, brave, like you,
“ Place glory in so false a view ?
“ Robbers invade their neighbour’s right. 65
“ Be lov’d ; let justice bound your might.
“ Mean are ambitious heroes’ boasts
“ Of wasted lands and slaughter’d hosts.
“ Pirates their power by murders gain ;
“ Wise kings by love and mercy reign. 70
“ To me your clemency hath shown
“ The virtue worthy of a throne.
“ Heaven gives you power above the rest,
“ Like Heaven, to succour the distressed.”
“ The case is plain,” the monarch said ; 75
“ False glory hath my youth misled ;
“ For beasts of prey, a servile train,
“ Have been the flatterers of my reign.
“ You reason well. Yet tell me, friend,
“ Did ever you in courts attend ? 80
“ For all my fawning rogues agree,
“ That human heroes rule like me.”

F A B L E II.

THE SPANIEL AND THE CAMELEON.

A SPANIEL, bred with all the care
 That waits upon a favourite heir,
 Ne'er felt Correction's rigid hand;
 Indulg'd to disobey command,
 In pamper'd ease his hours were spent:
 He never knew what learning meant.
 Such forward airs, so pert, so smart,
 Were sure to win his lady's heart;
 Each little mischief gain'd him praise;
 How pretty were his fawning ways!

The wind was south, the morning fair,
 He ventures forth to take the air:
 He ranges all the meadow round,
 And rolls upon the softest ground;
 When near him a Cameleon seen,
 Was scarce distinguish'd from the green.

"Dear emblem of the flattering host,
 "What, live with clowns! a genius lost!
 "To cities and the court repair;
 "A fortune cannot fail thee there:
 "Preferments shall thy talents crown;
 "Believe me, Friend; I know the Town."

"Sir," says the Sycophant, "like you,
 "Of old, politer life I knew:

"Like

FABLES. PART I.

33

" Like you, a courtier born and bred,
 " Kings lean'd their ear to what I said. 35
 " My whisper always met success;
 " The ladies prais'd me for address.
 " I knew to hit each courtier's passion,
 " And flatter'd every vice in fashion. 30
 " But Jove, who hates the liar's ways,
 " At once cut short my prosperous days,
 " And, sentenc'd to retain my nature,
 " Transform'd me to this crawling creature.
 " Doom'd to a life obscure and mean, 35
 " I wander in the sylvan scene:
 " For Jove the heart alone regards;
 " He punishes what man rewards.
 " How different is thy case and mine!
 " With men at least you sup and dine; 40
 " While I, condemn'd to thinnest fare,
 " Like those I flatter'd, feed on air."

FABLE III.

THE MOTHER, THE NURSE, AND THE FAIRY.

GIVE me a son. The blessing sent,
 Were ever parents more content?
 How partial are their doting eyes!
 No child is half so fair and wise.

Wak'd to the morning's pleasing care,
 The mother rose, and sought her heir.

D 2

She

She saw the Nurse like one possest,
With wringing hands and sobbing breast.

“ Sure some disaster has befall !

“ Speak, Nurse ; I hope the boy is well.” 10

“ Dear Madam, think not me to blame ;
Invisibly the Fairy came :

Your precious babe is hence convey'd,
And in the place a changeling laid.

Where are the father's mouth and nose ? 15

The mother's eyes, as black as sloes ?

See, here, a shocking aukward creature,
That speaks a fool in every feature !”

“ The woman's blind, the mother cries ;
I see wit sparkle in his eyes.” 20

“ Lord ! Madam, what a squinting leer !
No doubt the Fairy hath been here.”

Just as she spoke, a pigmy sprite
Pops through the key-hole swift as light ;
Perch'd on the cradle's top he stands, 25
And thus her folly reprimands.

“ Whence sprung the vain conceited lye,
That we the world with fools supply ?

What ! give our sprightly race away
For the dull helpless sons of clay ! 30

Besides, by partial fondness shown,
Like you, we doat upon our own.

Where yet was ever found a Mother

Who'd give her booby for another ?

And, should we change with human breed, 35
Well might we pass for fools indeed.”

F A B L E IV.

THE EAGLE AND THE ASSEMBLY OF ANIMALS.

AS Jupiter's all-seeing eye
Survey'd the worlds beneath the sky,
From this small speck of earth were sent
Murmurs and sounds of discontent ;
For every thing alive complain'd, 5
That he the hardest life sustain'd.

Jove calls his Eagle. At the word,
Before him stands the royal bird.
The bird, obedient, from Heaven's height,
Downward directs his rapid flight ; 10
Then cited every living thing,
To hear the mandates of his king.

" Ungrateful creatures ! whence arise
These murmurs which offend the skies ?
Why this disorder ? say the cause ; 15
For just are Jove's eternal laws.
Let each his discontent reveal ;
To yon' four Dog I first appeal."

" Hard is my lot, the Hound replies ;
On what fleet nerves the Greyhound flies ! 20
While I, with weary step and slow,
O'er plains, and vales, and mountains, go.
The morning sees my chace begun,
Nor ends it till the setting sun."

D 3

" When:

“ When (says the Greyhound) I pursue,
 My game is lost, or caught in view ;
 Beyond my sight the prey's secure ;
 The Hound is slow, but always sure ;
 And, had I his sagacious scent,
 Jove ne'er had heard my discontent.”

The Lion crav'd the Fox's art ;
 The Fox the Lion's force and heart :
 The Cock implor'd the Pigeon's flight,
 Whose wings were rapid, strong, and light :
 The Pigeon strength of wing despis'd,
 And the Cock's matchless valour priz'd.
 The fishes wish'd to graze the plain ;
 The Beasts, to skim beneath the main.
 Thus, envious of another's state,
 Each blam'd the partial hand of Fate.

The Bird of Heaven then cry'd aloud :
 “ Jove bids disperse the murmuring crowd ;
 The God rejects your idle prayers.
 Would ye, rebellious Mutineers !
 Entirely change your name and nature,
 And be the very envy'd creature ?
 What ! silent all, and none consent ?
 Be happy, then, and learn content ;
 Nor imitate the restless mind,
 And proud ambition, of mankind.”

F A B L E V.

THE WILD BOAR AND THE RAM.

A GAINST an elm a sheep was ty'd,
 The butcher's knife in blood was dy'd;
 The patient flock, in silent fright,
 From far beheld the horrid sight.
 A savage Boar, who near them stood, 5
 Thus mock'd to scorn the fleecy brood.
 " All cowards should be serv'd like you.
 See, see, your murderer is in view :
 With purple hands, and reeking knife,
 He strips the skin yet warm with life. 10
 Your quarter'd fires, your bleeding dams,
 The dying bleat of harmless lambs,
 Call for revenge. O stupid Race !
 The heart that wants revenge is base."
 " I grant, an ancient Ram replies, 15
 We bear no terror in our eyes;
 Yet think us not of soul so tame,
 Which no repeated wrongs inflame ;
 Insensible of every ill,
 Because we want thy tusks to kill. 20
 Know, those, who violence pursue,
 Give to themselves the vengeance due ;
 For in these massacres they find
 The two chief plagues that waste mankind.

Our skin supplies the wrangling bar,
 It wakes their slumbering sons to war;
 And well revenge may rest contented,
 Since drums and parchment were invented."

F A B L E VI.

THE MISER AND PLUTUS.

THE wind was high, the window shakes,
 With sudden start the Miser wakes;
 Along the silent room he stalks,
 Looks back, and trembles as he walks.
 Each lock and every bolt he tries,
 In every creek and corner pries;
 Then opes the chest with treasure stor'd,
 And stands in rapture o'er his hoard.
 But now, with sudden qualms possess'd,
 He wrings his hands, he beats his breast;
 By conscience stung, he wildly stares,
 And thus his guilty soul declares:

" Had the deep earth her stores confin'd,
 This heart had known sweet peace of mind.
 But virtue's fold. Good Gods! what price
 Can recompense the pangs of vice!
 O bane of good! seducing cheat!
 Can man, weak man, thy power defeat?
 Gold banish'd honour from the mind,
 And only left the name behind;
 Gold sow'd the world with every ill;
 Gold taught the murderer's sword to kill:

'Twas

FABLES. PART I.

41

'Twas gold instructed coward-hearts
In treachery's more pernicious arts.
Who can recount the mischiefs o'er?
Virtue resides on earth no more!"

25

He spoke, and sigh'd. In angry mood
Plutus, his god, before him stood.
The Miser, trembling, lock'd his chest;
The Vision frown'd, and thus address'd:

30

"Whence is this vile ungrateful rant,
Each sordid rascal's daily cant?
Did I, base wretch! corrupt mankind?
The fault's in thy rapacious mind.

Because my blessings are abus'd,

35

Must I be censur'd, curs'd, accus'd?

Ev'n Virtue's self by knaves is made

A cloak to carry on the trade;

And Power (when lodg'd in their possession)

Grows tyranny, and rank oppression.

40

Thus, when the villain crams his chest,

Gold is the canker of the breast;

'Tis avarice, insolence, and pride,

And every shocking vice beside:

But, when to virtuous hands 'tis given,

45

It blesses, like the dews of Heaven:

Like Heaven, it hears the orphan's cries,

And wipes the tears from widows' eyes.

Their crimes on gold shall Misers lay,

Who pawn'd their sordid souls for pay?

50

Let bravoës, then, when blood is spilt,

Upbraid the passive soul with guilt."

FABLE

F A B L E VII.

THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE GEESE.

A LION, tir'd with state-affairs,
 Quite sick of pomp, and worn with cares,
 Resolv'd (remote from noise and strife)
 In peace to pass his latter life.

It was proclaim'd ; the day was set ;
 Behold the general council met.
 The Fox was viceroy nam'd. The crowd
 To the new regent humbly bow'd.
 Wolves, bears, and mighty tigers, bend,
 And strive who most shall condescend.
 He straight assumes a solemn grace,
 Collects his wisdom in his face.
 The crowd admire his wit, his sense ;
 Each word hath weight and consequence.
 The flatterer all his art displays :
 He who hath power is sure of praise.
 A Fox stept forth before the rest,
 And thus the servile throng address :

“ How vast his talents, born to rule,
 And train'd in Virtue's honest school !
 What Clemency his temper sways !
 How uncorrupt are all his ways !
 Beneath his conduct and command,
 Rapine shall cease to waste the land.
 His brain hath stratagem and art ;
 Prudence and mercy rule his heart.

What

FABLES. PART I.

43

What blessings must attend the nation
Under this good administration!"

He said. A Goose, who distant stood,
Harangu'd apart the cackling brood :

30

" Whene'er I hear a knave commend,
He bids me shun his worthy friend.
What praise ! what mighty commendation !
But 'twas a Fox who spoke th' oration.

Foxes this government may prize,

35

As gentle, plentiful, and wise ;

If they enjoy the sweets, 'tis plain

We Geese must feel a tyrant-reign.

What havock now shall thin our race,

When every petty clerk in place,

40

To prove his taste, and seem polite,

Will feed on Geese both noon and night !"

FABLE VIII.

THE LADY AND THE WASP.

WHAT whispers must the Beauty bear !

What hourly nonsense haunts her ear !

Where'er her eyes dispense their charms,

Impertinence around her swarms.

Did not the tender nonsense strike,

5

Contempt and scorn might look dislike ;

Forbidding airs might thin the place,

The slightest flap a fly can chase :

But who can drive the numerous breed ?

Chace one, another will succeed.

10

Who

Who knows a fool, must know his brother ;
 One fop will recommend another :
 And with this plague she's rightly curst,
 Because she listen'd to the first.

As Doris, at her toilette's duty,
 Sat meditating on her beauty,
 She now was pensive now was gay,
 And loll'd the sultry hours away.

As thus in indolence she lies,
 A giddy Wasp around her flies.
 He now advances, now retires,
 Now to her neck and cheek aspires.
 Her fan in vain defends her charms ;
 Swift he returns, again alarms ;
 For by repulse he bolder grew,
 Perch'd on her lip, and sipt the dew.

She frowns ; she frets. " Good Gods ! she cries,
 Protect me from these teasing flies !
 Of all the plagues that Heaven hath sent,
 A Wasp is most impertinent."

The hovering insect thus complain'd ;
 " Am I then slighted, scorn'd, disdain'd ?
 Can such offence your anger wake ?
 'Twas beauty caus'd the bold mistake.
 Those cherry lips that breathe perfume,
 That cheek so ripe with youthful bloom,
 Made me with strong desire pursue
 The fairest peach that ever grew."

" Strike him not, Jenny, Doris cries,
 Nor murder Wasps like vulgar flies ;

FABLES. PART I.

45

For though he's free (to do him right),
The creature's civil and polite."

In ecstasies away he posts;

Where'er he came, the favour boasts;

Braggs how her sweetest tea he sips,

45

And shows the fugar on his lips.

The hint alarm'd the forward crew;

Sure of success, away they flew:

They share the dainties of the day,

Round her with airy music play:

50

And now they flutter, now they rest,

Now soar again, and skim her breast.

Nor were they banish'd, till she found

That Wasps have stings, and felt the wound.

FABLE IX.

THE BULL AND THE MASTIFF.

SEEK you to train your favourite boy?

Each caution, every care employ;

And, ere you venture to confide,

Let his preceptor's heart be try'd:

Weigh well his manners, life, and scope;

5

On these depends thy future hope.

As on a time, in peaceful reign,

A Bull enjoy'd the flowery plain,

A Mastiff pass'd; inflam'd with ire,

His eye-balls shot indignant fire.

10

He foam'd, he rag'd with thirst of blood.

Spurning the ground, the monarch stood,

And

And roar'd aloud: "Suspend the fight;
 In a whole skin go sleep to-night:
 Or tell me, ere the battle rage, 15
 What wrongs provoke thee to engage?
 Is it ambition fires thy breast,
 Or avarice, that ne'er can rest?
 From these alone unjustly springs
 The world-destroying wrath of kings." 20

The surly Mastiff thus returns:
 "Within my bosom glory burns.
 Like heroes of eternal name,
 Whom poets sing, I fight for fame.
 The butcher's spirit-stirring mind 25
 To daily war my youth inclin'd;
 He train'd me to heroic deed,
 Taught me to conquer, or to bleed."

"Curs'd Dog, the Bull reply'd, no more
 I wonder at thy thirst of gore; 30
 For thou (beneath a butcher train'd,
 Whose hands with cruelty are stain'd,
 His daily murders in thy view)
 Must, like thy tutor, blood pursue.
 Take, then, thy fate." With goring wound 35
 At once he lifts him from the ground:
 Aloft the sprawling hero flies,
 Mangled he falls, he howls, and dies.

F A B L E X.

THE ELEPHANT AND THE BOOKSELLER.

THE man who with undaunted toils
 Sails unknown seas to unknown foils,
 With various wonders feasts his sight:
 What stranger wonders does he write!
 We read, and in description view 5
 Creatures which Adam never knew;
 For, when we risk no contradiction,
 It prompts the tongue to deal in fiction.
 Those things that startle me or you
 I grant are strange; yet may be true. 10
 Who doubts that Elephants are found
 For science and for sense renown'd?
 Borri records their strength of parts,
 Extent of thought, and skill in arts;
 How they perform the law's decrees, 15
 And save the state the hangman's fees;
 And how by travel understand
 The language of another land.
 Let those, who question this report,
 To Pliny's ancient page resort. 20
 How learn'd was that sagacious breed!
 Who now (like them) the Greek can read?
 As one of these, in days of yore,
 Rummag'd a shop of learning o'er,
 Not like our modern dealers, minding 25
 Only the margin's breadth and binding,

A book

A book his curious eye detains,
 Where, with exactest care and pains,
 Were every beast and bird pourtray'd,
 That e'er the search of man survey'd;
 Their natures and their powers were writ
 With all the pride of human wit:
 The page he with attention spread,
 And thus remark'd on what he read:

“ Man with strong reason is endow'd;
 A beast scarce instinct is allow'd:
 But, let this author's worth be try'd,
 'Tis plain that neither was his guide.
 Can he discern the different natures,
 And weigh the power of other creatures,
 Who by the partial work hath shewn
 He knows so little of his own?
 How falsely is the Spaniel drawn!
 Did man from him first learn to fawn?
 A Dog proficient in the trade!
 He the chief flatterer Nature made!
 Go, Man! the ways of courts discern,
 You'll find a Spaniel still might learn.
 How can the Fox's theft and plunder
 Provoke his censure or his wonder?
 From Courtiers' tricks and Lawyers' arts,
 The Fox might well improve his parts.
 The Lion, Wolf, and Tiger's brood,
 He curses, for their thirst of blood.
 But is not Man to Man a prey?
 Beasts kill for hunger, Men for pay.”

F A B L E S. PART I.

49

The Bookseller, who heard him speak,
And saw him turn a page of Greek,
Thought, what a genius have I found !
Then thus address'd with bow profound: 60

“ Learn'd Sir, if you 'd employ your pen
Against the senseless sons of men,
Or write the history of Siam;
No man is better pay than I am.
Or, since you 're learn'd in Greek, let 's see 65
Something against the Trinity.”

When wrinkling with a sneer his trunk,
“ Friend, quoth the Elephant, you 're drunk:
E'en keep your money, and be wise;
Leave man on man to criticise: 70
For that you ne'er can want a pen
Among the senseless sons of men.
They unprovok'd will court the fray;
Envy 's a sharper spur than pay.
No author ever spar'd a brother; 75
Wits are gamecocks to one another.”

F A B L E XI.

THE PEACOCK, THE TURKEY, AND THE GOOSE.

IN beauty faults conspicuous grow;
The smallest speck is seen on snow.
As near a barn, by hunger led,
A peacock with the poultry fed,
All view'd him with an envious eye, 5
And mock'd his gaudy pageantry.

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E

He,

He, conscious of superior merit,
 Contemns their base reviling spirit;
 His state and dignity assumes,
 And to the sun displays his plumes,
 Which, like the Heavens' o'er-arching skies,
 Are spangled with a thousand eyes.
 The circling rays, and varied light,
 At once confound their dazzled sight;
 On every tongue detraction burns,
 And malice prompts their spleen by turns.

"Mark with what insolence and pride
 The creature takes his haughty stride,
 The Turkey cries. Can spleen contain?
 Sure never bird was half so vain!
 But, were intrinsic merit seen,
 We Turkeys have the whiter skin."

From tongue to tongue they caught abuse;
 And next was heard the hissing goose:

"What hideous legs! what filthy claws!
 I scorn to censure little flaws.
 Then what a horrid squalling throat!
 Ev'n owls are frightened at the note."

"True. Those are faults, the Peacock cries;
 My scream, my thanks, you may despise;
 But such blind critics rail in vain.
 What! overlook my radiant train!
 Know, did my legs (your scorn and sport)
 The Turkey or the Goose support,
 And did ye scream with harsher sound,
 Those faults in you had ne'er been found:

FABLES. PART I.

51

To all apparent beauties blind,
Each blemish strikes an envious mind.

Thus in assemblies have I seen
A nymph of brightest charms and mien
Wake envy in each ugly face,
And buzzing scandal fills the place.

40

FABLE XII.

CUPID, HYMEN, AND PLUTUS.

AS Cupid in Cythera's grove
Employ'd the lesser powers of Love,
Some shape the bow, or fit the string,
Some give the taper shaft its wing,
Or turn the polish'd quiver's mould,
Or head the darts with temper'd gold.

5

Amidst their toil and various care,
Thus Hymen, with assuming air,
Address'd the God: "Thou purblind chit,
Of awkward and ill-judging wit,
If matches are not better made,
At once I must forswear my trade.

10

You send me such ill-coupled folks,
That 'tis a shame to sell them yokes.
They squabble for a pin, a feather,
And wonder how they came together.

15

The husband's sullen, dogged, shy;
The wife grows flippant in reply:
He loves command and due restriction;
And she as well likes contradiction:

20

E 2

She

She never slavishly submits;
She 'll have her will, or have her fits.
He this way tugs, she th' other draws;
The man grows jealous, and with cause.
Nothing can save him but divorce;
And here the wife complies of course."

"When, says the boy, had I to do
With either your affairs or you?
I never idly spend my darts;
You trade in mercenary hearts.
For settlements the lawyer 's fee'd;
Is my hand witness to the deed?
If they like cat and dog agree,
Go rail at Plutus, not at me."

Plutus appear'd, and said, "Tis true,
In marriage, gold is all their view;
They seek not beauty, wit, or sense,
And love is seldom the pretence.
All offer incense at my shrine,
And I alone the bargain sign.
How can Belinda blame her fate?
She only ask'd a great estate.
Doris was rich enough, 'tis true;
Her lord must give her title too:
And every man, or rich or poor,
A fortune asks, and asks no more."

Avarice, whatever shape it bears,
Must still be coupled with its cares.

F A B L E XIII.

THE TAME STAG.

AS a young Stag the thicket past,
 The branches held his antlers fast.
 A clown, who saw the captive hung,
 Across the horns his halter flung.
 Now safely hamper'd in the cord, 5
 He bore the present to his lord.
 His lord was pleas'd; as was the clown,
 When he was tipp'd with half-a-crown.
 The Stag was brought before his wife;
 The tender lady begg'd his life. 10
 How sleek 's the skin! how speck'd like ermine!
 Sure never creature was so charming!
 At first within the yard confin'd,
 He flies and hides from all mankind;
 Now bolder grown, with fix'd amaze, 15
 And distant awe, presumes to gaze;
 Munches the linen on the lines,
 And on a hood or apron dines:
 He steals my little master's bread,
 Follows the servants to be fed: 20
 Nearer and nearer now he stands,
 To feel the praise of patting hands;
 Examines every fist for meat,
 And, though repuls'd, disdains retreat;
 Attacks again with level'd horns, 25
 And man, that was his terror, scorns.

Such is the country maiden's fright,
 When first a Redcoat is in fight;
 Behind the door she hides her face,
 Next time at distance eyes the lace:
 She now can all his terrors stand,
 Nor from his squeeze withdraws her hand.
 She plays familiar in his arms,
 And every foldier hath his charms.
 From tent to tent she spreads her flame;
 For custom conquers fear and shame.

F A B L E XIV.

THE MONKEY WHO HAD SEEN THE WORLD.

A MONKEY, to reform the times,
 Resolv'd to visit foreign climes;
 For men in distant regions roam,
 To bring politer manners home.
 So forth he fares, all toil defies:
 Misfortune serves to make us wise.

At length the treacherous snare was laid;
 Poor Pug was caught; to Town convey'd;
 There sold. (How envy'd was his doom,
 Made captive in a lady's room!)
 Proud, as a lover, of his chains,
 He day by day her favour gains.
 Whene'er the duty of the day
 The toilette calls, with mimic play
 He twirls her knots, he cracks her fan,
 Like any other gentleman.

In visits too, his parts and wit,
 When jests grew dull, were sure to hit.
 Proud with applause he thought his mind
 In every courtly art refin'd;

20

Like Orpheus, burnt with public zeal,
 To civilize the Monkey-weal;
 So watch'd occasion, broke his chain,
 And sought his native woods again.

The hairy sylvans round him press,
 Astonish'd at his strut and dress.

25

Some praise his sleeve, and others glote
 Upon his rich embroider'd coat,

His dapper perriwig commending,

With the black tail behind depending;

30

His powder'd back, above, below,

Like hoary frosts, or fleecy snow;

But all, with envy and desire,

His fluttering shoulder-knot admire.

Hear and improve, he pertly cries;

35

I come to make a nation wise.

Weigh your own worth; support your place,

The next in rank to human race.

In cities long I pass'd my days,

Convers'd with men, and learn'd their ways.

40

Their dress, their courtly manners see;

Reform your state, and copy me.

Seek ye to thrive? In flattery deal;

Your scorn, your hate, with that conceal.

Seem only to regard your friends,

45

But use them for your private ends.

Stint not to truth the flow of wit ;
 Be prompt to lie whene'er 'tis fit.
 Bend all your force to spatter merit ;
 Scandal is conversation's spirit.
 Boldly to every thing pretend,
 And men your talents shall commend.
 I knew the great. Observe me right ;
 So shall you grow, like man, polite.

He spoke, and bow'd. With muttering jaws
 The wondering circle grinn'd applause.

Now, warm'd with malice, envy, spite,
 Their most obliging friends they bite ;
 And, fond to copy human ways,
 Practise new mischiefs all their days.

Thus the dull lad, too tall for school,
 With travel finishes the fool ;
 Studious of every coxcomb's airs,
 He drinks, games, dresses, whores, and swears ;
 O'erlooks with scorn all virtuous arts,
 For vice is fitted to his parts.

F A B L E XV.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE PHEASANTS.

THE Sage, awak'd at early day,
 Through the deep forest took his way ;
 Drawn by the music of the groves,
 Along the winding gloom he roves :
 From tree to tree the warbling throats
 Prolong the sweet alternate notes ;

Eut.

FABLES. PART I.

57

But, where he pass, he terror threw,
The song broke short, the warblers flew;
The thrushes chatter'd with affright,
And nightingales abhorr'd his fight;
All animals before him ran,
To shun the hateful sight of man.

10

Whence is this dread of every creature?
Fly they our figure, or our nature!

As thus he walk'd in musing thought,
His ear imperfect accents caught;
With cautious step he nearer drew,
By the thick shade conceal'd from view.
High on the branch a pheasant stood,
Around her all her listening brood;
Proud of the blessings of her nest,
She thus a mother's care express'd.

15

20

“ No dangers here shall circumvent,
Within the woods enjoy content.
Sooner the hawk or vulture trust
Than man, of animals the worst.
In him ingratitude you find,
A vice peculiar to the kind.

25

The sheep whose annual fleece is dy'd
To guard his health, and serve his pride,
Forc'd from his fold and native plain,
Is in the cruel shambles slain.

30

The swarms who with industrious skill,
His hives with wax and honey fill,
In vain whole summer-days employ'd,
Their stores are sold, the race destroy'd.

35

What

What tribute from the goose is paid!
 Does not her wing all science aid?
 Does it not lovers' hearts explain,
 And drudge to raise the merchant's gain?
 What now rewards this general use?
 He takes the quills, and eats the goose.
 Man then avoid, detest his ways,
 So safety shall prolong your days.
 When services are thus acquitted,
 Be sure we Pheasants must be spitted."

40

45

F A B L E XVI.

THE PIN AND THE NEEDLE.

A PIN who long had serv'd a beauty,
 Proficient in the toilette's duty,
 Had form'd her sleeve, confin'd her hair,
 Or given her knot a smarter air,
 Now nearest to her heart was plac'd,
 Now in her manteau's tail disgrac'd:
 But could she partial Fortune blame,
 Who saw her lovers serv'd the same?

5

At length from all her honours cast,
 Through various turns of life she past;
 Now glitter'd on a taylor's arm,
 Now kept a beggar's infant warm;
 Now, rang'd within a miser's coat,
 Contributes to his yearly groat;
 Now, rais'd again from low approach,
 She visits in the doctor's coach:

10

15

Here,

Here, there, by various fortune tost,
At last in Gresham-hall was lost.

Charm'd with the wonders of the show,

On every side, above, below, 20

She now of this or that enquires,

What least was understood admires.

'Tis plain, each thing so struck her mind,

Her head 's of virtuoso kind.

“ And pray what 's this, and this, dear Sir ? ” 25

“ A Needle,” says th' interpreter.

She knew the name ; and thus the fool

Address'd her as a tailor's tool.

“ A Needle with that filthy stone,

Quite idle, all with rust o'ergrown ; 30

You better might employ your parts,

And aid the sempstresses in her arts ;

But tell me how the friendship grew

Between that paltry flint and you.”

“ Friend, says the Needle, cease to blame ; 35

I follow real worth and fame.

Know'st thou the loadstone's power and art,

That virtue virtues can impart ?

Of all his talents I partake :

Who then can such a friend forsake ? 40

'Tis I direct the pilot's hand

To shun the rocks and treacherous sand :

By me the distant world is known,

And either India is our own.

Had I with milliners been bred, 45

What had I been ? the guide of thread,

And

And drudg'd as vulgar Needles do,
Of no more consequence than you."

F A B L E XVII.

THE SHEPHERD'S DOG AND THE WOLF.

A WOLF, with hunger fierce and bold,
Ravag'd the plains, and thinn'd the fold;
Deep in the wood secure he lay,
The thefts of night regal'd the day.
In vain the shepherd's wakeful care
Had spread the toils, and watch'd the snare;
In vain the Dog pursued his pace,
The fleeter robber mock'd the chace.

As Lightfoot rang'd the forest round,
By chance his foe's retreat he found.

Let us a while the war suspend,
And reason as from friend to friend.

"A truce?" replies the Wolf. 'Tis done.
The Dog the parley thus begun.

"How can that strong intrepid mind
Attack a weak defenceless kind?

Those jaws should prey on nobler food,
And drink the boar's and lion's blood.

Great souls with generous pity melt,
Which coward tyrants never felt.

How harmless is our fleecy care!
Be brave, and let thy mercy spare."

"Friend, says the Wolf, the matter weigh;
Nature design'd us beasts of prey;

F A B L E S. PART I.

61

As such, when hunger finds a treat,
'Tis necessary wolves should eat.
If, mindful of the bleating weal,
Thy bosom burn with real zeal,
Hence, and thy tyrant lord beseech ;
To him repeat the moving speech :
A Wolf eats sheep but now and then,
Ten thousands are devour'd by men.
An open foe may prove a curse,
But a pretended friend is worse."

25

30

F A B L E XVIII.

THE PAINTER WHO PLEAS'D NOBODY
AND EVERY BODY.

L E S T men suspect your tale untrue,
Keep probability in view.
The traveller leaping o'er those bounds,
The credit of his book confounds.
Who with his tongue hath armies routed,
Makes even his real courage doubted.
But flattery never seems absurd ;
The flatter'd always take your word :
Impossibilities seem just ;
They take the strongest praise on trust.
Hyperboles, though ne'er so great,
Will still come short of self-conceit.
So very like a Painter drew,
That every eye the picture knew ;

5

10

He

He hit complexion, feature, air,
 So just, the life itself was there.
 No flattery with his colours laid,
 To bloom restor'd the faded maid ;
 He gave each muscle all its strength ;
 The mouth, the chin, the nose's length ;
 His honest pencil touch'd with truth,
 And mark'd the date of age and youth.

He lost his friends, his practice fail'd ;
 Truth should not always be reveal'd :
 In dusty piles his pictures lay,
 For no one sent the second pay.
 Two bustos, fraught with every grace,
 A Venus' and Apollo's face,
 He plac'd in view ; resolv'd to please,
 Whoever sat he drew from these,
 From these corrected every feature,
 And spirited each aukward creature.
 All things were set ; the hour was come,
 His palette ready o'er his thumb.
 My lord appear'd ; and seated right,
 In proper attitude and light,
 The Painter look'd, he sketch'd the piece,
 Then dipt his pencil, talk'd of Greece,
 Of Titian's tints, of Guido's air ;
 Those eyes, my Lord, the spirit there
 Might well a Raphael's hand require,
 To give them all the native fire ;
 The features, fraught with sense and wit,
 You'll grant, are very hard to hit ;

FABLES. PART I.

63

But yet with patience you shall view
As much as paint and art can do."

45

Observe the work. My Lord replied,
" Till now I thought my mouth was wide ;
Besides, my nose is somewhat long :
Dear Sir, for me, 'tis far too young."

50

" Oh ! pardon me, the artist cry'd ;
In this we Painters must decide.
The piece ev'n common eyes must strike,
I warrant it extremely like."

My Lord examin'd it a-new ;
No looking-glass seem'd half so true.

55

A lady came with borrow'd grace
He from his Venus form'd her face.

Her lover prais'd the Painter's art ;
So like the picture in his heart !

60

To every age some charm he lent ;
Ev'n beauties were almost content.

Through all the town his art they prais'd ;
His custom grew, his price was rais'd.

Had he the real likeness shown,
Would any man the picture own ?

65

But, when thus hapily he wrought,
Each found the likeness in his thought.

FABLE XIX.

THE LION AND THE CUB.

HOW fond are men of rule and place,
Who court it from the mean and base !

These

These cannot bear an equal nigh,
 But from superior merit fly.
 They love the cellar's vulgar joke,
 And lose their hours in ale and smoke.
 'There o'er some petty club preside;
 So poor, so paltry, is their pride!
 Nay, ev'n with fools whole nights will sit,
 In hopes to be supreme in wit.
 If these can read, to these I write,
 To set their worth in truest light.

A Lion-cub, of fardid mind,
 Avoided all the lion kind;
 Fond of applause he sought the feasts
 Of vulgar and ignoble beasts;
 With asses all his time he spent,
 Their club's perpetual president.
 He caught their manners, looks, and airs;
 An ass in every thing but ears!
 If e'er his Highness meant a joke,
 They grinn'd applause before he spoke;
 But at each word what shouts of praise!
 Goods gods! how natural he brays!

Elate with flattery and conceit,
 He seeks his royal fire's retreat;
 Forward and fond to show his parts,
 His Highness brays; the Lion starts.

"Puppy! that curs'd vociferation
 Betrays thy life and conversation:
 Coxcombs, an ever-noisy race,
 Are trumpets of their own disgrace."

"Why

“ Why so severe? the Cub replies;
Our senate always held me wise.”

“ How weak is pride! returns the fire: 35
All fools are vain when fools admire!
But know, what stupid asses prize,
Lions and noble beasts despise.”

F A B L E XX.

THE OLD HEN AND THE COCK.

RESTRAIN your child; you 'll soon believe
The text which says we sprung from Eve.

As an old Hen led forth her train,
And seem'd to peck to show the grain,
She rak'd the chaff, she scratch'd the ground, 5
And glean'd the spacious yard around.
A giddy chick, to try her wings,
On the well's narrow margin springs,
And prone she drops. The mother's breast
All day with sorrow was possess'd. 10

A Cock she met; her son she knew;
And in her heart affection grew.

“ My son, says she, I grant your years
Have reach'd beyond a mother's cares.
I see you vigorous, strong, and bold; 15
I hear with joy your triumphs told.
'Tis not from Cocks thy fate I dread;
But let thy ever-wary tread
Avoid yon' well; that fatal place
Is sure perdition to our race. 20

Print this my counsel on thy breast :
To the just gods I leave the rest."

He thank'd her care ; yet day by day
His bosom burn'd to disobey,
And every time the well he saw,
Scorn'd in his heart the foolish law :
Near and more near each day he drew,
And long'd to try the dangerous view.

" Why was this idle charge ? he cries ;
Let courage female fears despise.
Or did she doubt my heart was brave,
And therefore this injunction gave :
Or does her harvest store the place
A treasure for her younger race ?
And would she thus my search prevent ?
I stand resolv'd, and dare th' event."

Thus said, he mounts the margin's round,
And pries into the depth profound.
He stretch'd his neck ; and from below
With stretching neck advanc'd a foe :
With wrath his ruffled plumes he rears,
The foe with ruffled plumes appears :
Threat answer'd threat ; his fury grew ;
Headlong to meet the war he flew ;
But, when the watery death he found,
He thus lamented as he drown'd :

" I ne'er had been in this condition,
But for my Mother's prohibition."

F A B L E XXI.

THE RAT-CATCHER AND CATS.

THE rats by night such mischief did,
 Betty was every morning chid :

They undermin'd whole sides of bacon,
 Her cheese was sapp'd, her tarts were taken ;

Her pasties, fenc'd with thickest paste,
 Were all demolish'd and laid waste :

She curs'd the Cat, for want of duty,
 Who left her foes a constant booty.

An Engineer, of noted skill,

Engag'd to stop the growing ill.

From room to room he now surveys
 Their haunts, their works, their secret ways ;
 Finds where they 'scape an ambuscade,
 And whence the nightly fally's made.

An envious Cat from place to place,

Unseen, attends his silent pace :

She saw that, if his trade went on,

The purring race must be undone ;

So secretly removes his baits,

And every stratagem defeats.

Again he sets the poison'd toils ;

And Puss again the labour foils.

“ What foe (to frustrate my designs)

My schemes thus nightly countermines ?

Incens'd, he cries, this very hour

The wretch shall bleed beneath my power.”

So said, a ponderous trap he brought,
And in the fact poor Pufs was caught.

"Smuggler, says he, thou shalt be made
A victim to our loss of trade."

The captive Cat, with piteous mews,
For pardon, life, and freedom sues.

"A sister of the science spare;
One interest is our common care."

"What insolence! the Man reply'd;
Shall Cats with us the game divide?
Were all your interloping band
Extinguish'd, or expell'd the land,
We Rat-catchers might raise our fees,
Sole guardians of a nation's cheese!"

A Cat, who saw the lifted knife,
Thus spoke, and sav'd her sister's life.

"In every age and clime, we see,
Two of a trade can ne'er agree.
Each hates his neighbour for encroaching:
'Squire stigmatizes 'squire for poaching;
Beauties with beauties are in arms,
And scandal pelts each other's charms;
Kings, too, their neighbour-kings dethrone,
In hope to make the world their own:
But let us limit our desires,
Not war like beauties, kings, and 'squires;
For though we both one prey pursue,
There's game enough for us and you."

F A B L E XXII.

THE GOAT WITHOUT A BEARD.

'TIS certain that the modish passions
Descend among the crowd like fashions.

Excuse me, then, if pride, conceit,

(The manners of the fair and great)

I give to monkeys, asses, dogs,

5

Fleas, owls, goats, butterflies, and hogs,

I say that these are proud: what then?

I never said they equal men.

A Goat (as vain as Goat can be)

Affected singularity:

10

Whene'er a thymy bank he found,

He roll'd upon the fragrant ground,

And then with fond attention stood,

Fix'd o'er his image in the flood.

"I hate my frowzy beard, he cries,

15

My youth is lost in this disguise.

Did not the females know my vigour,

Well might they loath this reverned figure."

Resolv'd to smooth his shaggy face,

He sought the barber of the place.

20

A slipant monkey, spruce and smart,

Hard-by, profess'd the dapper art:

His pole with pewter-basons hung,

Black rotten teeth in order strung,

F 3

Rang'd

Rang'd cups, that in the window stood,
 Lin'd with red rags to look like blood;
 Did well his threefold trade explain,
 Who shav'd, drew teeth, and breath'd a vein.

The Goat he welcomes with an air,
 And seats him in his wooden chair :
 Mouth, nose, and cheek, the lather hides ;
 Light, smooth, and swift, the razor glides.

“ I hope your custom, Sir, says Pug.
 Sure never face was half so smug ! ”

The Goat, impatient for applause,
 Swift to the neighbouring hill withdraws.
 The shaggy people grinn'd and star'd.

“ Heigh-day ! what 's here ? without a beard !

Say, Brother, whence the dire disgrace ?

What envious hand hath robb'd your face ? ”

When thus the fop, with smiles of scorn,

“ Are beards by civil nations worn ?

Ev'n Muscovites have mow'd their chins.

Shall we, like formal Capuchins,

Stubborn in pride, retain the mode,

And bear about the hairy load ?

Whene'er we through the village stray,

Are we not mock'd along the way,

Insulted with loud shouts of scorn,

By boys our beards disgrac'd and torn ? ”

“ Were you no more with Goats to dwell,

Brother, I grant you reason well,”

Replies a bearded Chief. “ Beside,

If boys can mortify thy pride,

FABLES. PART I.

71

How wilt thou stand the ridicule
Of our whole flock? Affected fool!"

55

Coxcombs, distinguish'd from the rest,
To all but coxcombs are a jest.

FABLE XXIII.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER CATS.

WHO friendship with a knave hath made,
Is judg'd a partner in the trade.

The matron, who conducts abroad
A willing nymph, is thought a bawd;
And, if a modest girl is seen

5

With one who cures a lover's spleen,
We guess her not extremely nice,
And only wish to know her price.

'Tis thus that on the choice of friends
Our good or evil name depends.

10

A wrinkled hag, of wicked fame,
Beside a little smoaky flame

Sat hovering, pinch'd with age and frost;
Her shrivel'd hands, with veins emboss'd,

Upon her knees her weight sustains,

15

While palsy shook her crazy brains:

She mumbles forth her backward prayers,

An untam'd scold of fourscore years.

About her swarm'd a numerous brood

Of Cats, who, lank with hunger, mew'd,

F 4

Teaz'd

'Teaz'd with their cries, her choler grew,
 And thus she sputter'd. "Hence, ye crew!
 Fool that I was, to entertain
 Such imps, such fiends, a hellish train!
 Had ye been never hous'd and nurs'd,
 I for a witch had ne'er been curs'd.
 To you I owe that crowds of boys
 Worry me with eternal noise;
 Straws laid across my pace retard,
 The horseshoe's nail'd (each threshold's guard);
 The stunted broom the wenches hide,
 For fear that I should up and ride;
 They stick with pins my bleeding feat,
 And bid me show my secret teat."

"To hear you prate, would vex a saint;
 Who hath most reason of complaint?"
 Replies a Cat. "Let's come to proof.
 Had we ne'er starv'd beneath your roof,
 We had, like others of our race,
 In credit liv'd as beasts of chace.
 'Tis infamy to serve a hag;
 Cats are thought imps, her broom a nag;
 And boys against our lives combine,
 Because 'tis said your Cats have nine,"

F A B L E XXIV.

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE SNAIL.

ALL upstarts, insolent in place,
Remind us of their vulgar race.

As in the sunshine of the morn
A Butterfly (but newly born)
Sat proudly perking on a rose,
With pert conceit his bosom glows;
His wings (all glorious to behold)
Bedropt with azure, jet, and gold,
Wide he displays; the spangled dew
Reflects his eyes and various hue.

5

10

His now-forgotten friend, a snail,
Beneath his house, with slimy trail,
Crawls o'er the grass; whom when he spies,
In wrath he to the gardener cries :

“ What means yon' peasant's daily toil, 15
From choaking weeds to rid the soil ?
Why wake you to the morning's care ?
Why with new arts correct the year ?
Why grows the peach with crimson hue ?
And why the plumb's inviting blue ? 20
Were they to feast his taste design'd,
That vermin of voracious kind !
Crush then the slow, the pilfering race,
So purge thy garden from disgrace.”

“ What

"What arrogance! the Snail reply'd;
 How insolent is upstart pride!
 Hadst thou not thus, with insult vain,
 Provok'd my patience to complain,
 I had conceal'd thy meaner birth,
 Nor trac'd thee to the scum of earth:
 For scarce nine suns have wak'd the hours,
 To swell the fruit, and paint the flowers,
 Since I thy humbler life survey'd,
 In base, in fordid guise array'd;
 A hideous insect, vile, unclean,
 You drag'd a slow and noisome train;
 And from your spider-bowels drew
 Foul film, and spun the dirty clue.
 I own my humble life, good friend;
 Snail was I born, and Snail shall end.
 And what's a Butterfly? at best
 He's but a caterpillar drest;
 And all thy race (a numerous feed)
 Shall prove of caterpillar breed."

F A B L E. XXV.

THE SCOLD AND THE PARROT.

THE husband thus reprov'd his wife:
 "Who deals in slander, lives in strife.
 Art thou the herald of disgrace,
 Denouncing war to all thy race;
 Can nothing quell thy thunder's rage,
 Which spares nor friend, nor sex, nor age?

That

That vixen tongue of your's, my Dear,
 Alarms our neighbours far and near.
 Good Gods! 'tis like a rolling river,
 That murmuring flows, and flows for ever! 10
 Ne'er tir'd, perpetual discord sowing!
 Like Fame, it gathers strength by going."

"Heigh-day!" the flippant tongue replies,
 "How solemn is the fool! how wise!
 Is Nature's choicest gift debarr'd? 15
 Nay, frown not; for I will be heard.
 Women of late are finely ridden,
 A Parrot's privilege forbidden!
 You praise his talk, his squalling song;
 But wives are always in the wrong." 20

Now reputations flew in pieces
 Of mothers, daughters, aunts, and nieces:
 She ran the Parrot's language o'er,
 Bawd, huffy, drunkard, flattern, whore;
 On all the sex she vents her fury, 25
 Tries and condemns without a jury.

At once the torrent of her words
 Alarm'd cat, monkey, dogs, and birds:
 All join their forces to confound her,
 Pufs spits, the monkey chatters round her; 30
 The yelping cur her heels assaults;
 The magpie blabs out all her faults;
 Poll, in the uproar, from his cage,
 With this rebuke outcream'd her rage.

"A Parrot is for talking priz'd, 35
 But prattling women are despis'd.

She

She who attacks another's honour,
 Draws every living thing upon her.
 Think, Madam, when you stretch your lungs,
 That all your neighbours too have tongues: 40
 One slander must ten thousand get;
 The world with interest pays the debt.

FABLE XXVI.

THE CUR AND THE MASTIFF.

A SNEAKING Cur, the master's spy,
 Rewarded for his daily lye,
 With secret jealousies and fears
 Set all together by the ears.
 Poor Puss to-day was in disgrace, 5
 Another Cat supply'd her place;
 The Hound was beat, the Mastiff chid,
 The Monkey was the room forbid;
 Each to his dearest friend grew shy,
 And none could tell the reason why. 10
 A plan to rob the house was laid:
 The thief with love seduc'd the maid,
 Cajol'd the Cur, and stroak'd his head,
 And bought his secrecy with bread;
 He next the Mastiff's honour try'd, 15
 Whose honest jaws the bribe defy'd;
 He stretch'd his hand to proffer more;
 The furlly dog his fingers tore.

Swift

F A B L E S. PART I.

77

Swift ran the Cur ; with indignation
The Master took his information. 20

“ Hang him, the villain ’s curs’d,” he cries ;
And round his neck the halter ties.

The Dog his humble suit preferr’d,
And beg’d in justice to be heard.
The master fate. On either hand 25
The cited Dogs confronting stand ;
The Cur the bloody tale relates,
And, like a Lawyer, aggravates.

“ Judge not unheard, the Mastiff cry’d,
But weigh the cause of either side. 30
Think not that treachery can be just ;
Take not informers’ words on trust ;
They ope their hand to every pay,
And you and me by turns betray.”

He spoke ; and all the truth appear’d : 35
The Cur was hang’d, the Mastiff clear’d.

F A B L E XXVII.

THE SICK MAN AND THE ANGEL.

“ I S there no hope ?” the sick man said.

The silent doctor shook his head,
And took his leave with signs of sorrow,
Despairing of his fee to-morrow.

When thus the Man, with gasping breath ; 5
“ I feel the chilling wound of Death.

Since

Since I must bid the world adieu,
 Let me my former life review.
 I grant my bargains well were made,
 But all men over-reach in trade ; 10
 'Tis self-dence in each profession :
 Sure self-defence is no transgression.
 The little portion in my hands,
 By good security on lands
 Is well increas'd. If, unawares, 15
 My justice to myself and heirs
 Hath let my debtor rot in jail,
 For want of good sufficient bail ;
 If I, by writ, or bond, or deed,
 Reduc'd a family to need ; 20
 My will hath made the world amends ;
 My hope on charity depends.
 When I am number'd with the dead,
 And all my pious gifts are read,
 By heaven and earth 'twill then be known 25
 My charities were amply shown."

An Angel came. " Ah! Friend! he cry'd.
 No more in flattering hope confide.
 Can thy good deeds in former times
 Outweigh the balance of thy crimes? 30
 What widow or what orphan prays
 To crown thy life with length of days?
 A pious action's in thy power,
 Embrace with joy the happy hour.
 Now, while you draw the vital air, 35
 Prove your intention is sincere :

This

This instant give a hundred pound;
Your neighbours want, and you abound."

"But why such haste, the sick Man whines;
Who knows as yet what Heaven designs? 40
Perhaps I may recover still.

That sum and more are in my will."

"Fool, says the Vision, now 'tis plain
Your life, your soul, your Heaven, was gain.
From every side, with all your might, 45
You scrap'd, and scrap'd beyond your right;
And after death would fain atone,
By giving what is not your own."

"While there is life, there's hope, he cry'd;
Then why such haste?" so groan'd, and dy'd. 50

FABLE XXVIII.

THE PERSIAN, THE SUN, AND THE CLOUD.

IS there a bard whom genius fires,
Whose every thought the God inspires?

When envy reads the nervous lines,

She frets, she rails, she raves, she pines;

Her hissing snakes with venom swell; 5

She calls her venal train from hell:

The servile fiends her nod obey,

And all Curll's authors are in pay.

Fame calls up Calumny and Spite:

Thus shadow owes its birth to light. 10

As,

As, prostrate to the God of Day,
With heart devout, a Persian lay,
His invocation thus begun:

“ Parent of Light! all-seeing Sun!
Prolific beam, whose rays dispense
The various gifts of Providence,
Accept our praise, our daily prayer;
Smile on our fields, and bless the year.”

A Cloud, who mock'd his grateful tongue,
The day with sudden darkness hung;
With pride and envy swell'd, aloud
A voice thus thunder'd from the Cloud.

“ Weak is this gaudy god of thine,
Whom I at will forbid to shine.
Shall I nor vows nor incense know?
Where praise is due, the praise bestow.”

With fervent zeal the Persian mov'd,
Thus the proud Calumny reprov'd.
“ It was that God who claims my prayer
Who gave thee birth, and rais'd thee there;
When o'er his beams the veil is thrown,
Thy substance is but plainer shown:
A passing gale, a puff of wind,
Dispels thy thickest troops combin'd.”

The gale arose; the vapour tost
(The sport of winds) in air was lost;
The glorious orb the day refines.
Thus envy breaks, thus merit shines.

F A B L E XXIX.

THE FOX AT THE POINT OF DEATH.

A FOX, in life's extreme decay,
 Weak, sick, and faint, expiring lay:
 All appetite had left his maw,
 And age difarm'd his mumbling jaw.
 His numerous race around him stand, 5
 To learn their dying fire's command:
 He rais'd his head with whining moan,
 And thus was heard the feeble tone.
 " Ah! Sons! from evil ways depart;
 My crimes lie heavy on my heart. 10
 See, see, the murder'd Geese appear!
 Why are those bleeding Turkeys there
 Why all around this cackling train,
 Who haunt my ears for chicken slain?"
 The hungry Foxes round them star'd, 15
 And for the promis'd feast prepar'd.
 " Where, Sir, is all this dainty cheer?
 Nor Turkey, Goose, nor Hen, is here.
 These are the phantoms of your brain;
 And your sons lick their lips in vain." 20
 " O Gluttons! says the drooping Sire,
 Restrain inordinate desire.
 Your liquorish taste you shall deplore,
 When peace of conscience is no more.
 Vol. XXXVII. G Does

Does not the hound betray our pace,
 And gins and guns destroy our race?
 Thieves dread the searching eye of power;
 And never feel the quiet hour.
 Old age (which few of us shall know)
 Now puts a period to my woe.
 Would you true happiness attain,
 Let honesty your passions rein;
 So live in credit and esteem,
 And the good name you lost redeem."

"The counsel's good, a Fox replies,
 Could we perform what you advise.
 Think what our ancestors have done;
 A line of thieves from son to son.
 To us descends the long disgrace,
 And infamy hath mark'd our race.
 Though we, like harmless sheep, should feed,
 Honest in thought, in word, and deed,
 Whatever hen-roost is decreas'd,
 We shall be thought to share the feast.
 The change shall never be believ'd.
 A lost good name is ne'er retriev'd."

"Nay, then, replies the feeble Fox,
 (But, hark! I hear a hen that clucks)
 Go; but be moderate in your food;
 A chicken, too, might do me good."

F A B L E XXX.

THE SETTING DOG AND THE PARTRIDGE,

THE ranging Dog the stubble tries,
 And searches every breeze that flies ;
 The scent grows warm ; with cautious fear
 He creeps, and points the covey near ;
 The men in silence, far behind, 5
 Conscious of game, the net unbind.

A Partridge, with experience wise,
 The fraudulent preparation spies ;
 She mocks their toils, alarms her brood,
 The covey springs, and seeks the wood ; 10
 But, ere her certain wings she tries :
 Thus to the creeping Spaniel cries :
 " Thou fawning slave to man's deceit,
 Thou pimp of luxury, sneaking cheat,
 Of thy whole species thou disgrace ; 15
 Dogs should disown thee of their race !
 For, if I judge their native parts,
 They're born with honest open hearts ;
 And, ere they serv'd man's wicked ends,
 Were generous foes, or real friends." 20

When thus the Dog, with scornful smile :
 " Secure of wing, thou dar'st revile.
 Clowns are to polish'd manners blind ;
 How ignorant is the rustic mind !

My worth sagacious courtiers see,
 And to perferment rise, like me.
 The thriving pimp, who beauty sets,
 Hath oft' enhanc'd a nation's debts:
 Friend sets his friend, without regard,
 And ministers his skill reward:
 Thus train'd by man, I learnt his ways;
 And growing favour feasts my days."

"I might have guess'd, the Partridge said,
 The place where you were train'd and fed;
 Servants are apt, and in a trice
 Ape to a hair their master's vice.
 You came from court, you say. Adieu!"
 She said, and to the covey flew.

F A B L E XXXI.

THE UNIVERSAL APPARITION.

ARAKE, by every passion rul'd,
 With every vice his youth had cool'd;
 Disease his tainted blood assails;
 His spirits droop, his vigour fails:
 With secret ills at home he pines,
 And, like infirm old age, declines.

As, twing'd with pain, he pensive sits,
 And raves, and prays, and swears, by fits,
 A ghastly Phantom, lean and wan,
 Before him rose, and thus began:

“ My name, perhaps, hath reach’d your ear ;
Attend, and be advis’d by Care.

Nor love, nor honour, wealth, nor power,
Can give the heart a chearful hour,
When health is lost. Be timely wise : 15
With health all taste of pleasure flies.”

Thus said, the Phantom disappears.

The wary counsel wak’d his fears.
He now from all excess abstains,
With physic purifies his veins ; 20
And, to procure a sober life,
Resolves to venture on a wife.

But now again the Sprite ascends,
Where’er he walks, his ear attends,
Innuates that beauty’s frail, 25
That perseverance must prevail ;
With jealousies his brain inflames,
And whispers all her lovers’ names.
In other hours she represents
His household charge, his annual rents, 30
Increasing debts, perplexing duns,
And nothing for his younger sons.

Straight all his thought to gain he turns,
And with the thirst of lucre burns.
But, when possess’d of Fortune’s store, 35
The Spectre haunts him more and more ;
Sets want and misery in view,
Bold thieves, and all the murdering crew ;
Alarms him with eternal frights,
Infests his dream, or wakes his nights. 40

How shall he chace this hideous guest?
 Power may perhaps protect his rest.
 To Power he rose. Again the Sprite
 Besets him morning, noon, and night;
 Talks of Ambition's tottering seat,
 How Envy persecutes the great,
 Of rival hate, of treacherous friends,
 And what disgrace his fall attends.

The court he quits, to fly from Care,
 And seeks the peace of rural air:
 His groves, his fields, amus'd his hours;
 He prun'd his trees, he rais'd his flowers.
 But Care again his steps pursues,
 Warns him of blasts, of blighting dews,
 Of plundering insects, snails, and rains,
 And drougts that starv'd the labour'd plains.
 Abroad, at home, the Spectre's there;
 In vain we seek to fly from Care.

At length he thus the Ghost address:
 "Since thou must be my constant guest,
 Be kind, and follow me no more;
 For Care, by right, should go before."

F A B L E XXXII.

THE TWO OWLS AND THE SPARROW.

TWO formal Owls together sat,
 Conferring thus in solemn chat.

"How is the modern taste decay'd!
 Where's the respect to wisdom paid?"

F A B L E S. PART I.

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Our worth the Grecian fages knew ;

5

They gave our fires the honour due ;

They weigh'd the dignity of fowls,

And pry'd into the depth of Owls,

Athens, the feat of learned fame,

With general voice rever'd our name ;

10

On merit title was conferr'd,

And all ador'd th' Athenian bird."

" Brother, you reason well, replies

The solemn mate, with half-shut eyes.

Right. Athens was the feat of learning,

15

And truly wisdom is discerning.

Besides, on Pallas' helm we fit,

'The type and ornament of wit :

But now, alas ! we 're quite neglected,

And a pert Sparrow's more respected."

20

A Sparrow, who was lodg'd beside,

O'erhears them sooth each other's pride ;

And thus he nimbly vents his heat :

" Who meets a fool must find conceit.

I grant you were at Athens grac'd,

25

And on Minerva's helm were plac'd ;

But every bird that wings the sky,

Except an Owl, can tell you why :

From hence they taught their schools to know

How false we judge by outward shew ;

30

That we should never looks esteem,

Since fools as wise as you might seem.

Would ye contempt and scorn avoid,

Let your vain-glory be destroy'd ;

G 4

Humble

Humble your arrogance of thought,
 Pursue the ways by Nature taught :
 So shall you find delicious fare,
 And grateful farmers praise your care ;
 So shall sleek mice your chace reward,
 And no keen cat find more regard."

F A B L E XXXIII.

THE COURTIER AND PROTEUS.

WHENEVER a Courtier's out of place,
 The country shelters his disgrace ;
 Where, doom'd to exercise and health,
 His house and gardens own his wealth.
 He builds new schemes, in hope to gain
 The plunder of another reign ;
 Like Philip's son, would fain be doing,
 And fights for other realms to ruin.

As one of these (without his wand)
 Pensive along the winding strand
 Employ'd the solitary hour,
 In projects to regain his power,
 The waves in spreading circles ran,
 Proteus arose, and thus began.

" Came you from court ? for in your mien
 A self-important air is seen."

He frankly own'd his friends had trick'd him,
 And how he fell his party's victim.

" Know"

“ Know, says the God, by matchless skill
I change to every shape at will ; 20
But yet, I’m told, at court you see
Those who presume to rival me.”

Thus said : a Snake, with hideous trail,
Proteus extends his scaly mail.

“ Know, says the Man, though proud in place,
All Courtiers are of reptile race.
Like you, they take that dreadful form,
Bask in the sun, and fly the storm ;
With malice hiss, with envy glote,
And for convenience change their coat ; 30
With new-got lustre rear their head,
Though on a dunghill born and bred.”

Sudden the God a Lion stands ;
He shakes his mane, he spurns the sands.
Now a fierce Lynx, with fiery glare ; 35
A Wolf, an Afs, a Fox, a Bear.

“ Had I ne’er liv’d at court, he cries,
Such transformation might surprize ;
But there, in quest of daily game,
Each able Courtier acts the same ; 40
Wolves, Lions, Lynxes, while in place,
Their friends and fellows are their chace.
They play the Bear’s and Fox’s part,
Now rob by force, now steal with art.
They sometimes in the senate bray, 45
Or, chang’d again to beasts of prey,
Down from the Lion to the Ape,
Practise the frauds of every shape.”

So

So said : upon the God he flies,
In cords the struggling captive ties.

“ Now, Proteus ! now (to truth compell'd) 50
Speak, and confess thy art excell'd.
Use strength, surprise, or what you will,
The Courtier finds evasions still ;
Not to be bound by any ties, 55
And never forc'd to leave his lyes.”

F A B L E XXXIV.

THE MASTIFF.

THOSE who in quarrels interpose,
Must often wipe a bloody nose.

A Mastiff, of true English blood,
Lov'd fighting better than his food.
When dogs were snarling for a bone, 5
He long'd to make the war his own,
And often found (when two contend)
To interpose obtain'd his end.
He glory'd in his limping pace ;
The scars of honour seam'd his face ; 10
In every limb a gash appears,
And frequent fights retrench'd his ears.

As on a time he heard from far
Two dogs engag'd in noisy war,
Away he scours, and lays about him, 15
Resolv'd no fray should be without him.

Forth

Forth from his yard a tanner flies,
And to the bold intruder cries :

“ A cudgel shall correct your manners :
Whence sprung this cursed hate to tanners ? 20
While on my dog you vent your spite,
Sirrah ! 'tis me you dare not bite.”

To see the battle thus perplex'd,
With equal rage a butcher, vex'd,
Hoarse-screaming from the circled crowd, 25
To the curs'd Mastiff cries aloud :

Both Hockleyhole and Marybone
The combats of my dog have known :
He ne'er, like bullies, coward-hearted,
Attacks in public, to be parted. 30
Think not, rash fool, to share his fame ;
Be his the honour, or the shame.”

Thus said, they swore, and rav'd like thunder,
Then dragg'd their fasten'd dogs asunder ;
While clubs and kicks from every side 35
Rebounded from the Mastiff's hide.

All reeking now with sweat and blood,
A while the parted warriors stood ;
Then pour'd upon the meddling foe,
Who, worried, howl'd and sprawl'd below.
He rose ; and limping from the fray,
By both sides mangled, sneak'd away.

F A B L E XXXV.

THE BARLEY-MOW AND THE DUNGHILL.

HOW many faucy airs we meet
 From Temple-bar to Aldgate-street!
 Proud rogues, who shared the South-sea prey,
 And sprung like mushrooms in a day!
 They think it mean to condescend
 To know a brother or a friend;
 They blush to hear their mother's name,
 And by their pride expose their shame.

As cros his yard, at early day,
 A careful farmer took his way,
 He stopp'd; and, leaning on his fork,
 Observ'd the flail's incessant work.
 In thought he measur'd all his store,
 His geese, his hogs, he number'd o'er;
 In fancy weigh'd the fleeces shorn,
 And multiply'd the next year's corn.

A Barley-mow, which stood beside,
 Thus to its musing master cry'd:
 " Say, good Sir, is it fit or right
 To treat me with neglect and slight?
 Me, who contribute to your cheer,
 And raise your mirth with ale and beer?
 Why thus insulted, thus disgrac'd,
 And that vile dunghill near me plac'd?

Are

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Are those poor sweepings of a groom,
That filthy sight, that nauseous fume,
Meet objects here? Command it hence;
A thing so mean must give offence."

25

The humble Dunghill thus reply'd:

"Thy master hears, and mocks thy pride: 30

Insult not thus the meek and low;

In me thy benefactor know;

My warm assistance gave thee birth,

Or thou hadst perish'd low in earth;

But up-starts, to support their station, 35

Cancel at once all obligation."

FABLE XXXVI.

PYTHAGORAS AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

PYTHAGORAS rose at early dawn,

By soaring meditation drawn;

To breathe the fragrance of the day,

Through flowery fields he took his way,

In musing contemplation warm, 5

His steps misled him to a farm,

Where on a ladder's topmost round

A Peasant stood; the hammer's sound

Shook the weak barn. "Say, friend, what care

Calls for thy honest labour there?" 10

The Clown, with furly voice replies,

"Vengeance aloud for justice cries.

This

This kite, by daily rapine fed,
 My hens' annoy, my turkeys' dread,
 At length his forfeit life hath paid ; 15
 See on the wall his wings display'd :
 Here nail'd, a terror to his kind,
 My fowls shall future safety find ;
 My yard the thriving poultry feed,
 And my barns' refuse fat the breed." 20

" Friend, says the Sage, the doom is wise ;
 For public good the murderer dies :
 But, if these tyrants of the air
 Demand a sentence so severe,
 Think how the glutton, man, devours ; 25
 What bloody feasts regale his hours !
 O impudence of power and might,
 Thus to condemn a hawk or kite,
 When thou, perhaps, carnivorous finner,
 Hadst pullets yesterday for dinner !" 30

" Hold, cry'd the Clown, with passion heated,
 Shall kites and men alike be treated ?
 When Heaven the world with creatures stor'd,
 Man was ordain'd their sovereign lord."

" Thus tyrants boast, the Sage reply'd, 35
 Whose murders spring from power and pride.
 Own then this manlike kite is slain,
 Thy greater luxury to sustain ;
 For " Petty rogues submit to Fate,
 " That great ones may enjoy their state *." 40

* Garth's Dispensary.

FABLE

F A B L E XXXVII.

THE FARMER'S WIFE AND THE RAVEN.

WHY are those tears? why droops your head?
Is then your other husband dead?

Or does a worse disgrace betide?

Hath no one since his death apply'd?

Alas! you know the cause too well; 5

The salt is spilt, to me it fell;

Then, to contribute to my loss,

My knife and fork were laid across;

On Friday too! the day I dread!

Would I were safe at home in bed! 10

Last night (I vow to Heaven 'tis true)

Bounce from the fire a coffin flew.

Next post some fatal news shall tell:

God send my Cornish friends be well!

Unhappy Widow, cease thy tears, 15

Nor feel affliction in thy fears;

Let not thy stomach be suspended;

Eat now, and weep when dinner's ended;

And, when the butler clears the table,

For thy desert I'll read my Fable. 20

Betwixt her swagging panniers' load

A Farmer's Wife to market rode,

And, jogging on, with thoughtful care,

Summ'd up the profits of her ware;

When starting from her silver dream, 25

Thus far and wide was heard her scream.

“ That

“ That Raven on yon’ left hand oak
 (Curse on his ill-betiding croak !)
 Bodes me no good.” No more she said,
 When poor blind Ball, with stumbling tread, 30
 Fell prone ; o’erturn’d the pannier lay,
 And her mash’d eggs bestrow’d the way.

She, sprawling in the yellow road,
 Rail’d, swore, and curs’d. “ Thou croaking toad,
 A murrain take thy whoreson throat ! 35
 I knew misfortune in the note.”

“ Dame, quoth the Raven, spare your oaths,
 Unclench your fist, and wipe your cloaths.
 But why on me those curses thrown ?
 Goody, the fault was all your own ; 40
 For, had you laid this brittle ware
 On Dun, the old sure-footed mare,
 Though all the Ravens of the Hundred
 With croaking had your tongue out-thundered,
 Sure-footed Dun had kept her legs, 45
 And you, good Woman, sav’d your eggs.”

F A B L E XXXVIII.

THE TURKEY AND THE ANT.

IN other men we faults can spy,
 And blame the mote that dims their eye,
 Each little speck and blemish find ;
 To our own stronger errors blind.

A Tur-

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A Turkey, tir'd of common food, 5
 Forsook the barn, and fought the wood;
 Behind her ran an infant train,
 Collecting here and there a grain.
 "Draw near, my Birds! the Mother cries,
 This hill delicious fare supplies; 10
 Behold the busy negroe race,
 See millions blacken all the place!
 Fear not; like me, with freedom eat;
 An Ant is most delightful meat.
 How blest'd, how envy'd, were our life, 15
 Could we but 'scape the poulterer's knife!
 But man, curs'd man, on Turkeys preys,
 And Christmas shortens all our days.
 Sometimes with oysters we combine,
 Sometimes assist the savoury chine; 20
 From the low peasant to the lord,
 The Turkey smokes on every board,
 Sure men for gluttony are curs'd,
 Of the seven deadly sins the worst."
 An Ant, who climb'd beyond his reach, 25
 Thus answer'd from the neighbouring beech:
 "Ere you remark another's sin,
 Bid thy own conscience look within;
 Control thy more voracious bill,
 Nor for a breakfast nations kill."

F A B L E XXXIX.

THE FATHER AND JUPITER.

THE Man to Jove his suit preferr'd;
 He begg'd a wife: his prayer was heard,
 Jove wonder'd at his bold addressing;
 For how precarious is the blessing!

A wife he takes: and now for heirs
 Again he worries Heaven with prayers.
 Jove nods assent: two hopeful boys
 And a fine girl reward his joys.

Now more solicitous he grew,
 And set their future lives in view;
 He saw that all respect and duty
 Were paid to wealth, to power, and beauty.

“ Once more, he cries, accept my prayer;
 Make my lov'd progeny thy care:
 Let my first hope, my favourite boy,
 All Fortune's richest gifts enjoy.
 My next with strong ambition fire;
 May favour teach him to aspire,
 Till he the step of power ascend,
 And courtiers to their idol bend!
 With every grace, with every charm,
 My daughter's perfect features arm.
 If Heaven approve, a Father's blest'd.”
 Jove smiles, and grants his full request.

The first, a miser at the heart,
 Studious of every griping art,

Heaps

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Heaps hoards on hoards with anxious pain,
And all his life devotes to gain.

He feels no joy, his cares increase,

He neither wakes nor sleeps in peace ; 30

In fancy'd want (a wretch complete)

He starves, and yet he dares not eat.

The next to sudden honours grew ;

The thriving art of courts he knew ;

He reach'd the height of power and place, 35

Then fell the victim of disgrace.

Beauty with early bloom supplies

His daughter's cheeks, and points her eyes.

The vain coquette each suit disdains,

And glories in her lovers' pains. 40

With age she fades, each lover flies ;

Contemn'd, forlorn, she pines and dies.

When Jove the Father's grief survey'd,

And heard him Heaven and Fate upbraid,

Thus spoke the God: " By outward show 45

Men judge of happiness and woe.

Shall ignorance of good and ill

Dare to direct th' eternal will ?

Seek virtue ; and, of that possess,

To Providence resign the rest." 50

F A B L E XL.

THE TWO MONKEYS.

THE learned, full of inward pride,
The sops of outward show deride ;

H 2

The

The fop, with learning at defiance,
 Scoffs at the pedant and the science :
 The Don, a formal solemn strutter;
 Despises Monsieur's airs and flutter ;
 While Monsieur mocks the formal fool,
 Who looks, and speaks, and walks, by rule.
 Britain, a medley of the twain,
 As pert as France, as grave as Spain,
 In fancy wiser than the rest,
 Laughs at them both, of both the jest.
 Is not the Poet's chiming close
 Censur'd by all the sons of Prose ?
 While bards of quick imagination
 Despise the sleepy prose narration.
 Men laugh at apes : they men contemn ;
 For what are we but apes to them ?

Two Monkeys went to Southwark fair ;
 No critics had a sourer air :
 They forc'd their way through draggled folks,
 Who gap'd to catch Jack Pudding's jokes ;
 Then took their tickets for the show,
 And got by chance the foremost row.
 To see their grave observing face,
 Provok'd a laugh through all the place.

" Brother, says Pug, and turn'd his head,
 The rabble's monstrously ill-bred."

Now through the booth loud hisses ran,
 Nor ended till the show began.
 The tumbler whirls the flip-flap round,
 With somersets he shakes the ground ;

The cord beneath the dancer springs;
Aloft in air the vaulter swings;
Distorted now, now prone depends, 35
Now through his twisted arms ascends;
The crowd, in wonder and delight,
With clapping hands applaud the fight.

With smiles, quoth Pug, "If pranks like these
The giant-apes of reason please, 40

How would they wonder at our arts!

They must adore us for our parts.

High on the twig I've seen you cling,

Play, twist, and turn in airy ring:

How can those clumsy things, like me, 45

Fly with a bound from tree to tree?

But yet, by this applause, we find

These emulators of our kind

Discern our worth, our parts regard,

Who our mean mimics thus reward." 50

"Brother, the grinning mate replies,

In this I grant that man is wise:

While good example they pursue,

We must allow some praise is due;

But, when they strain beyond their guide, 55

I laugh to scorn the mimic pride;

For how fantastic is the sight,

To meet men always bolt upright,

Because we sometimes walk on two!

I hate the imitating crew." 60

F A B L E XLI.

THE OWL AND THE FARMER.

AN Owl of grave deport and mien,
 Who (like the Turk) was seldom seen,
 Within a barn had chose his station,
 As fit for prey and contemplation :
 Upon a beam aloft he sits,
 And nods, and seems to think by fits.
 So have I seen a man of news
 Or Post-boy or Gazette peruse,
 Smoke, nod, and talk with voice profound,
 And fix the fate of Europe round.
 Sheaves pil'd on sheaves hid all the floor :
 At dawn of morn to view his store
 The Farmer came. The hooting guest
 His self-importance thus exprest :

“ Reason in man is mere pretence :
 How weak, how shallow, is his sense !
 To treat with scorn the Bird of Night,
 Declares his folly or his spite.
 Then, too, how partial is his praise !
 The lark's, the linnet's, chirping lays
 To his ill-judging ears are fine ;
 And nightingales are all divine :
 But the more knowing feather'd race
 See wisdom stamp'd upon my face.
 Whene'er to visit light I deign,
 What flocks of fowl compose my train !

Like

Like slaves, they crowd my flight behind,
And own me of superior kind."

The Farmer laugh'd, and thus reply'd:
"Thou dull important lump of pride,

Dar'st thou with that harsh grating tongue
Depreciate birds of warbling song?

Indulge thy spleen: know men and fowl
Regard thee, as thou art, an Owl.

Besides, proud Blockhead! be not vain

Of what thou call'st thy slaves and train:

Few follow Wisdom or her rules;

Fools in derision follow fools."

FABLE XLII.

THE JUGGLERS.

A JUGGLER long through all the Town
Had rais'd his fortune and renown;
You'd think (so far his art transcends)
The devil at his fingers' ends.

Vice heard his fame, she read his bill;
Convinc'd of his inferior skill,
She sought his booth, and from the crowd
Defy'd the man of art aloud.

"Is this then he so fam'd for sleight?
Can this slow bungler cheat your sight?
Dares he with me dispute the prize?
I leave it to impartial eyes."

Provok'd, the Juggler cry'd, "'Tis done;
In science I submit to none."

Thus said, the cups and balls he play'd;
 By turns this here, that there, convey'd.
 The cards, obedient to his words,
 Are by a fillip turn'd to birds.
 His little boxes change the grain:
 Trick after trick deludes the train.
 He shakes his bag, he shews all fair;
 His fingers spread, and nothing there;
 Then bids it rain with showers of gold;
 And now his ivory eggs are told;
 But, when from thence the hen he draws,
 Amaz'd spectators hum applause.

Vice now slept forth, and took the place,
 With all the forms of his grimace.

"This magic looking-glass, she cries,
 (There, hand it round) will charm your eyes."
 Each eager eye the sight desir'd,
 And every man himself admir'd.

Next, to a senator addressing,
 "See this bank-note; observe the blessing,
 Breathe on the bill. Heigh, pass! 'Tis gone."
 Upon his lips a padlock shown.
 A second puff the magic broke;
 The padlock vanish'd, and he spoke.

Twelve bottles rang'd upon the board
 All full, with heady liquor stor'd,
 By clean conveyance disappear,
 And now two bloody swords are there.

A purse she to a thief expos'd;
 At once his ready fingers clos'd.

He

FABLES. PART I.

105

He opes his fist, the treasure's fled;
He sees a halter in its stead.

45

She bids ambition hold a wand;
He grasps a hatchet in his hand.

A box of charity she shows.

"Blow here;" and a church-warden blows. 50

'Tis vanish'd with conveyance neat,
And on the table smokes a treat.

She shakes the dice, the board she knocks,
And from all pockets fills her box.

She next a meagre rake address.

55

"This picture see; her shape, her breast!

What youth, and what inviting eyes!

Hold her, and have her." With surprize,

His hand expos'd a box of pills,

And a loud laugh proclaim'd his ills.

60

A counter, in a miser's hand,
Grew twenty guineas at command.

She bids his heir the sum retain,

And 'tis a counter now again.

A guinea with her touch you see

65

Take every shape but Charity;

And not one thing you saw, or drew,

But chang'd from what was first in view.

The Juggler now, in grief of heart,

With this submission own'd her art.

70

"Can I such matchless sleight withstand!

How practice hath improv'd your hand!

But now and then I cheat the throng;

You every day, and all day long."

FABLE

F A B L E XLIII.

THE COUNCIL OF HORSES.

UPON a time a neighing steed,
 Who graz'd among a numerous breed,
 With mutiny had fir'd the train,
 And spread dissension through the plain.
 On matters that concern'd the state
 The Council met in grand debate.
 A Colt, whose eye-balls flam'd with ire,
 Elate with strength and youthful fire,
 In haste stept forth before the rest,
 And thus the listening throng address'd.

“ Good Gods ! how abject is our race,
 Condemn'd to slavery and disgrace !
 Shall we our servitude retain,
 Because our fires have borne the chain ?
 Consider, Friends ! your strength and might ;
 'Tis conquest to assert your right.
 How cumbrous is the gilded coach !
 The pride of man is our reproach.
 Were we design'd for daily toil,
 To drag the plough-share through the soil,
 To sweat in harness through the road,
 To groan beneath the carrier's load ?
 How feeble are the two-legg'd kind !
 What force is in our nerves combin'd !
 Shall then our nobler jaws submit
 To foam and champ the galling bit ?

Shall

Shall haughty man my back bestride ?
Shall the sharp spur provoke my side ?
Forbid it, Heavens ! Reject the rein ;
Your shame, your infamy, disdain. 30

Let him the lion first control,
And still the tiger's famish'd growl.
Let us, like them, our freedom claim,
And make him tremble at our name."

A general nod approv'd the cause, 35
And all the circle neigh'd applause.

When, lo ! with grave and solemn pace,
A Steed advanc'd before the race,
With age and long experience wise ;
Around he cast his thoughtful eyes, 40
And, to the murmurs of the train,
Thus spoke the Nestor of the plain.

" When I had health and strength, like you,
The toils of servitude I knew ;

Now grateful man rewards my pains, 45
And gives me all these wide domains.

At will I crop the year's increase ;
My latter life is rest and peace.

I grant, to man we lend our pains,
And aid him to correct the plains ; 50

But doth not he divide the care,
Through all the labours of the year ?

How many thousand structures rise,
To fence us from inclement skies !

For us he bears the sultry day, 55
And stores up all our winter's hay.

He

He sows, he reaps the harvest's gain;
We share the toil, and share the grain.
Since every creature was decreed
To aid each other's mutual need,
Appease your discontented mind,
And act the part by Heaven assign'd."

60

The tumult ceas'd. The Colt submitted,
And, like his ancestors, was bitted.

F A B L E XLIV.

THE HOUND AND THE HUNTSMAN.

IMPERTINENCE at first is borne
With heedless flight, or smiles of scorn;
Teaz'd into wrath, what patience bears
The noisy fool who perseveres?

The morning wakes, the Huntsman sounds, 5
At once rush forth the joyful Hounds;
They seek the wood with eager pace,
Through bush, through brier, explore the chase:
Now scatter'd wide they try the plain,
And snuff the dewy turf in vain. 10
What care, what industry, what pains!
What universal silence reigns!

Ringwood, a dog of little fame,
Young; pert, and ignorant of game,
At once displays his babbling throat; 15
The pack, regardless of the note,
Pursue the scent; with louder strain
He still persists to vex the train.

The

F A B L E S. PART I.

109

The Huntsman to the clamour flies,
The smacking lash he smartly plies. 20
His ribs all welk'd, with howling tone
The puppy thus express'd his moan:
“ I know the music of my tongue
Long since the pack with envy stung.
What will not spite ? These bitter smarts 25
I owe to my superior parts.”

“ When Puppies prate, the Huntsman cry'd,
They shew both ignorance and pride :
Fools may our scorn, not envy, raise ;
For envy is a kind of praise. 30
Had not thy forward noisy tongue
Proclaim'd thee always in the wrong,
Thou might'st have mingled with the rest,
And ne'er thy foolish nose confess ;
But fools, to talking ever prone, 35
Are sure to make their follies known.”

F A B L E XLV.

THE POET AND THE ROSE.

I HATE the man who builds his name
On ruins of another's fame.
Thus prudes, by characters o'erthrown,
Imagine that they raise their own.
Thus scribblers, covetous of praise, 5
Think slander can transplant the bays.

Beauties

Beauties and bards have equal pride,
 With both all rivals are decry'd.
 Who praises Lesbia's eyes and feature,
 Must call her sister aukward creature;
 For the kind flattery's sure to charm,
 When we some other nymph disarm.

10

As in the cool of early day
 A Poet sought the sweets of May,
 The garden's fragrant breath ascends,
 And every stalk with odour bends;
 A rose he pluck'd, he gaz'd, admir'd,
 Thus singing, as the Muse inspir'd:
 "Go, Rose, my Chloe's bosom grace;

20

"How happy shall I prove,
 "Might I supply that envy'd place
 "With never-fading love!"

"There, Phoenix-like, beneath her eye,
 "Involv'd in fragrance, burn and die.
 "Know, hapless Flower! that thou shalt find;
 "More fragrant Roses there;
 "I see thy withering head reclin'd
 "With envy and despair!"

"One common fate we both must prove;
 "You die with envy, I with love."

30

"Spare your comparisons, reply'd
 An angry Rose, who grew beside.

Of all mankind you should not flout us;
 What can a Poet do without us?

In every love-song Roses bloom;
 We lend you colour and perfume:

35

Does

FABLES. PART I.

111

Does it to Chloe's charms conduce,
To found her praise on our abuse ?
Must we, to flatter her, be made
To wither, envy, pine, and fade ?

40

FABLE XLVI.

THE CUR, THE HORSE, AND THE SHEPHERD'S
DOG.

THE lad of all-sufficient merit
With modesty ne'er damps his spirit ;
Presuming on his own deserts,
On all alike his tongue exerts ;
His noisy jokes at random throws,
And pertly spatters friend and foes.
In wit and war the bully race
Contribute to their own disgrace :
Too late the forward youth shall find
That jokes are sometimes paid in kind ;
Or, if they canker in the breast,
He makes a foe who makes a jest.

5

10

A village Cur, of snappish race,
The pertest puppy of the place,
Imagin'd that his treble throat
Was blest with Music's sweetest note ;
In the mid road he basking lay,
The yelping nuisance of the way ;
For not a creature pass'd along,
But had a sample of his song.

15

20

Soon

Soon as the trotting Steed he hears,
 He starts, he cocks his dapper ears;
 Away he scowls, assaults his hoof;
 Now near him snarls, now barks aloof;
 With shrill impertinence attends,
 Nor leaves him till the village ends.
 It chanc'd, upon his evil day,
 A Pad came pacing down the way;
 The Cur, with never-ceasing tongue,
 Upon the passing traveller sprung.
 The Horse, from scorn provok'd to ire,
 Flung backward; rolling in the mire,
 The Puppy howl'd, and bleeding lay;
 The Pad in peace pursu'd his way.

A Shepherd's Dog, who saw the deed,
 Detesting the vexatious breed,
 Bespoke him thus: "When coxcombs prate,
 They kindle wrath, contempt, or hate;
 Thy teasing tongue had judgement ty'd,
 Thou hadst not like a puppy dy'd."

F A B L E XLVII.

THE COURT OF DEATH.

DEATH, on a solemn night of state,
 In all his pomp of terror sate;
 Th' attendants of his gloomy reign,
 Diseases dire, a ghastly train!

Crowd

Crowd the vast court. With hollow tone, 5
A voice thus thunder'd from the throne :
" This night our minister we name,
Let every servant speak his claim ;
Merit shall bear this ebon wand."
All, at the word, stretch'd forth their hand. 10

Fever, with burning heat posselt,
Advanc'd, and for the wand address.

" I to the weekly bills appeal,
Let those express my fervent zeal ;
On every slight occasion near, 15
With violence I persevere."

Next Gout appears with limping pace,
Pleads how he shifts from place to place ;
From head to foot how swift he flies,
And every joint and sinew plies ; 20
Still working when he seems supprest,
A most tenacious stubborn guest.

A haggard spectre from the crew
Crawls forth, and thus asserts his due :
" 'Tis I who taint the sweetest joy, 25
And in the shape of Love destroy :
My thanks, sunk eyes, and noseless face,
Prove my pretension to the place."

Stone urg'd his ever-growing force ;
And, next, Consumption's meagre corse, 30
With feeble voice that scarce was heard,
Broke with short coughs, his suit preferr'd :

" Let none object my lingering way,
I gain, like Fabius, by delay ;

Fatigue and weaken every foe
By long attack, secure, though slow."

Plague represents his rapid power,
Who thinn'd a nation in an hour.

All spoke their claim, and hop'd the wand.

Now expectation hush'd the band;
When thus the Monarch from the throne:

" Merit was ever modest known.

What, no Physician speak his right!
None here! but fees their toils requite.

Let then Intemperance take the wand,
Who fills with gold their zealous hand.

You, Fever, Gout, and all the rest,
(Whom wary men, as foes, detest)

Forego your claim; no more pretend;

Intemperance is esteem'd a friend;

He shares their mirth, their social joys,
And as a courted guest destroys.

The charge on him must justly fall,
Who finds employment for you all."

F A B L E. XLVIII.

THE GARDENER AND THE HOG.

A GARDENER, of peculiar taste,
On a young Hog his favour plac'd,
Who fed not with the common herd;
His tray was to the hall preferr'd.

He

FABLES. PART I.

115

35 He wallow'd underneath the board,
Or in his master's chamber snor'd,
Who fondly stroak'd him every day,
And taught him all the Puppy's play.
Where'er he went, the grunting friend
Ne'er fail'd his pleasure to attend.

5

10

40 As on a time the loving pair
Walk'd forth to tend the garden's care,
The Master thus address'd the Swine:

" My house, my garden, all is thine.

45 On turnips feast whene'er you please,

15

And riot in my beans and pease;

If the potatoe's taste delights,

Or the red carrot's sweet invites,

Indulge thy morn and evening hours;

50 But let due care regard my flowers:

20

My tulips are my garden's pride:

What vast expence those beds supply'd!"

The Hog by chance one morning roam'd,

Where with new ale the vessels foam'd:

He munches now the steaming grains,

25

Now with full swill the liquor drains.

Intoxicating fumes arise;

He reels, he rolls his winking eyes;

Then staggering through the garden scours,

And treads down painted ranks of flowers.

30

With delving snout he turns the soil,

And cools his palate with the spoil.

The Master came, the ruin spy'd;

He " Villain! suspend thy rage, he cry'd.

Hast thou, thou most ungrateful sot,
My charge, my only charge, forgot?
What, all my flowers!" No more he said,
But gaz'd, and sigh'd, and hung his head.

The Hog with fluttering speech returns:
" Explain, Sir, why your anger burns.
See there, untouch'd, your tulips strown,
For I devour'd the roots alone."

At this the Gardener's passion grows;
From oaths and threats he fell to blows.
The stubborn brute the blows sustains,
Assaults his leg, and tears the veins.

" Ah! foolish Swain! too late you find
That styes were for such friends design'd!"

Homeward he limps with painful pace,
Reflecting thus on past disgrace:
" Who cherishes a brutal mate,
Shall mourn the folly soon or late."

F A B L E XLIX.

THE MAN AND THE FLEA.

WHETHER on earth, in air, or main,
Sure every thing alive is vain!

Does not the Hawk all fowls survey,
As destin'd only for his prey?
And do not tyrants, prouder things,
Think men were born for slaves to kings?

When

When the Crab views the pearly strands,
 Or Tagus, bright with golden sands,
 Or crawls beside the coral grove,
 And hears the ocean roll above,
 "Nature is too profuse, says he,
 Who gave all these to pleasure me!"

10

When bordering pinks and roses bloom,
 And every garden breathes perfume;
 When peaches glow with sunny dyes,
 Like Laura's cheek when blushes rise;
 When with huge figs the branches bend,
 When clusters from the vine depend;
 The Snail looks round on flower and tree,
 And cries, "All these were made for me!"

15

20

"What dignity's in human nature!"
 Says Man, the most conceited creature,
 As from a cliff he cast his eye,
 And view'd the sea and arched sky.
 The sun was sunk beneath the main;
 The moon and all the starry train
 Hung the vast vault of Heaven. The Man
 His contemplation thus began:

25

"When I behold this glorious show,
 And the wide watery world below,
 The scaly people of the main,
 The beasts that range the wood or plain,
 The wing'd inhabitants of air,
 The day, the night, the various year;
 And know all these by Heaven design'd
 As gifts to pleasure human-kind;

30

35

I cannot raise my worth too high;
Of what vast consequence am I!"

"Not of th' importance you suppose,
Replies a Flea upon his nose.
Be humble, learn thyself to scan;
Know, pride was never made for man.
'Tis vanity that swells thy mind.
What! heaven and earth for thee design'd!
For thee, made only for our need,
That more important Fleas might feed."

F A B L E L.

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

FRRIENDSHIP, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame.

The child, whom many fathers share,
Hath seldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendships; who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.

A Hare who, in a civil way,
Comply'd with every thing, like Gay,
Was known by all the bestial train
Who haunt the wood, or graze the plain;
Her care was never to offend;
And every creature was her friend.

As forth she went at early dawn,
To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,
Behind she hears the hunter's cries,
And from the deep-mouth'd thunder flies.

She starts, she stops, she pants for breath;
 She hears the near advance of death;
 She doubles, to mislead the hound,
 And measures back her mazy round;
 Till, fainting in the public way,
 Half-dead with fear she gasping lay.

20

What transport in her bosom grew,
 When first the Horse appear'd in view!

"Let me, says she, your back ascend,
 And owe my safety to a friend.

25

You know my feet betray my flight:
 To friendship every burden's light."

The Horse reply'd, "Poor honest Pufs,
 It grieves my heart to see thee thus:

30

Be comforted, relief is near,
 For all your friends are in the rear."

She next the stately Bull implor'd;
 And thus reply'd the mighty lord:

"Since every beast alive can tell
 That I sincerely wish you well,

35

I may, without offence, pretend
 To take the freedom of a friend.

Love calls me hence; a favourite Cow
 Expects me near yon' barley-mow;

40

And, when a lady's in the case,
 You know, all other things give place.
 To leave you thus might seem unkind;
 But see, the Goat is just behind."

The Goat remark'd "her pulse was high,
 Her languid head, her heavy eye:

45

My back, says he, may do you harm;
The Sheep's at hand, and wool is warm."

The sheep was feeble, and complain'd
" His sides a load of wool sustain'd;
Said, he was slow, confess'd his fears;
For hounds eat sheep as well as hares."

She now the trotting Calf address'd,
To save from death a friend distress'd.

" Shall I, says he, of tender age,
In this important care engage?
Older and abler pass'd you by;
How strong are those! how weak am I!
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offence.
Excuse me, then; you know my heart;
But dearest friends, alas! must part.
How shall we all lament! Adieu;
For see the hounds are just in view."

END OF THE FIRST PART.

FABLES

F A B L E S.

PART THE SECOND.

ADVERTISEMENT.

These Fables were finished by Mr. GAY, and intended for the press a short time before his death; when they were left, with his other papers, to the care of his noble friend and patron the Duke of Queensberry. His Grace has accordingly permitted them to the press; and they are here printed from the originals in the Author's own hand-writing. We hope they will please equally with his former Fables, though mostly on subjects of a graver and more political turn. They will certainly shew him to have been (what he esteemed the best character) a man of a truly honest heart, and a sincere lover of his country.

F A B L E I.

THE DOG AND THE FOX.

To a Lawyer.

I KNOW you Lawyers can, with ease,
Twist words and meanings as you please;
That language, by your skill made pliant,
Will bend to favour every client;

That

That 'tis the fee directs the sense,
 To make out either side's pretence.
 When you peruse the clearest case,
 You see it with a double face:
 For scepticism's your profession;
 You hold there's doubt in all expression.

Hence is the bar with fees supply'd;
 Hence eloquence takes either side.
 Your hand would have but paltry gleanings,
 Could every man express his meaning.
 Who dares presume to pen a deed,
 Unless you previously are fee'd?
 'Tis drawn; and, to augment the cost,
 In dull prolixity engrosts.

And now we're well secur'd by law,
 Till the next brother find a flaw.

Read o'er a will. Was 't ever known
 But you could make the will your own?
 For, when you read, 'tis with intent
 To find out meanings never meant.
 Since things are thus, *se defendendo*,
 I bar fallacious *inuendo*.

Sagacious Porta's skill could trace
 Some beast or bird in every face.
 The head, the eye, the nose's shape,
 Prov'd this an owl, and that an ape.
 When, in the sketches thus design'd,
 Resemblance brings some friend to mind,
 You show the piece, and give the hint,
 And find each feature in the print;

F A B L E S. PART II.

123

So monstrous-like the portrait's found,
All know it, and the laugh goes round,
Like him I draw from general nature;
Is't I or you then fix the satire?

35

So, Sir, I beg you, spare your pains
In making comments on my strains.

40

All private slander I detest,
I judge not of my neighbour's breast:
Party and prejudice I hate,
And write no libels on the state.

Shall not my Fable censure vice,
Because a knave is over-nice?

45

And, lest the guilty hear and dread,
Shall not the decalogue be read?

If I lash vice in general fiction,
Is't I apply, or self-conviction?

50

Brutes are my theme. Am I to blame,
If men and morals are the same?

I no man call or ape or ass;

'Tis his own conscience holds the glass.

Thus void of all offence I write:

55

Who claims the fable, knows his right.

A shepherd's Dog unskill'd in sports,
Pick'd up acquaintance of all sorts;

Among the rest a Fox he knew;

By frequent chat their friendship grew.

60

Says Reynard, "'Tis a cruel case,
That man should stigmatize our race.

No doubt, among us rogues you find,

As among dogs and human kind;

And

That 'tis the fee directs the sense,
 To make out either side's pretence.
 When you peruse the clearest case,
 You see it with a double face:
 For scepticism's your profession;
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That man should stigmatize our race.

No doubt, among us rogues you find,

As among dogs and human kind;

And

And yet (unknown to me and you)
 There may be honest men and true.
 Thus slander tries whate'er it can
 To put us on the foot with man.

63

Let my own actions recommend;
 No prejudice can blind a friend:
 You know me free from all disguise;
 My honour as my life I prize."

70

By talk like this, from all mistrust
 The Dog was cur'd, and thought him just.

As on a time the Fox held forth
 On conscience, honesty, and worth,
 Sudden he stopp'd; he cock'd his ear;
 Low dropt his bushy tail with fear.

75

"Bless us! the hunters are abroad:
 What's all that clatter on the road!"

80

"Hold, says the Dog, we're safe from harm,
 'Twas nothing but a false alarm.

At yonder town 'tis market-day;
 Some farmer's wife is on the way;
 'Tis so (I know her pyebald mare),
 Dame Dobbins with her poultry-ware."

85

Reynard grew huff. Says he, "This sneer
 From you I little thought to hear:

Your meaning in your looks I see.

Pray, what's Dame Dobbins, friend, to me? go

Did I e'er make her poultry thinner!

Prove that I owe the Dame a dinner."

"Friend, quoth the Cur, I meant no harm;

Then why so captious? why so warm?

My

FABLES. PART II.

125

My words in common acceptation,
Could never give this provocation. 95

No lamb (for aught I ever knew)
May be more innocent than you."

At this, gall'd Reynard winc'd, and swore
Such language ne'er was given before. 100

"What's lamb to me? this faucy hint
Shows me, base Knave, which way you squint.

If th' other night your master lost
Three lambs, am I to pay the cost?
Your vile reflections would imply 105

That I'm the thief. You Dog, you lye."

"Thou knave, thou fool! (the Dog reply'd)
The name is just, take either side;
Thy guilt these applications speak:
Sirrah, 'tis conscience makes you squeak." 110

So saying, on the Fox he flies:
The self-convicted felon dies.

FABLE II.

THE VULTURE, THE SPARROW, AND OTHER
BIRDS.

To a Friend in the Country.

ERE I begin, I must premise,
Our ministers are good and wise;
So, though malicious tongues apply,
Pray what care they, or what care I?

If I am free with courts, be't known, 5
I ne'er presume to mean our own.

If

If general morals seem to joke
 On ministers, and such-like folk,
 A captious fool may take offence;
 What then? He knows his own pretence,
 I meddle with no state-affairs,
 But spare my jest to save my ears.
 Our present schemes are too profound,
 For Machiavel himself to found:
 To censure them I 'ave no pretension;
 I own they 're past my comprehension.

You say your brother wants a place,
 ('Tis many a younger brother's case)
 And that he very soon intends
 To ply the court, and teaze his friends.
 If there his merits chance to find
 A patriot of an open mind,
 Whose constant actions prove him just
 To both a king's and people's trust,
 May he, with gratitude, attend,
 And owe his rise to such a friend!

You praise his parts, for business fit,
 His learning, probity, and wit;
 But those alone will never do,
 Unless his patron have them too.

I 'ave heard of times (pray God defend us!
 We 're not so good but he can mend us)
 When wicked ministers have trod
 On kings and people, law and God;
 With arrogance they girt the throne,
 And knew no interest but their own.

Then

Then virtue, from preferment barr'd
Gets nothing but its own reward.

A gang of petty knaves attend 'em,
With proper parts to recommend 'em.

40

Then, if his patron burn with lust,
The first in favour's pimp the first.

His doors are never clos'd to spies,
Who cheer his heart with double lyes ;

They flatter him, his foes defame,
So lull the pangs of guilt and shame.

45

If schemes of lucre haunt his brain,
Projectors swell his greedy train ;

Vile brokers ply his private ear
With jobs of plunder for the year ;

50

All consciences must bend and ply ?

You must vote on, and not know why :

Through thick and thin you must go on ;

One scruple, and your place is gone.

Since plagues like these have curs'd a land, 55

And favourites cannot always stand,

Good courtiers should for change be ready,

And not have principles too steady ;

For, should a knave engross the power,

(God shield the realm from that sad hour !) 60

He must have rogues or slavish fools ;

For what's a knave without his tools ?

Wherever those a people drain,

And strut with infamy and gain,

I envy not their guilt and state,

65

And scorn to share the public hate.

Let

Let their own servile creatures rise,
 By screening fraud, and venting lyes;
 Give me, kind Heaven, a private station*,
 A mind serene for contemplation:
 Title and profit I resign;
 The post of honour shall be mine.
 My Fable read, their merits view,
 Then herd who will with such a crew.

70

In days of yore (my cautious rhymes
 Always except the present times)
 A greedy Vulture, skill'd in game,
 Inur'd to guilt, unaw'd by shame,
 Approach'd the throne in evil hour,
 And step by step intrudes to power:
 When at the royal Eagle's ear,
 He longs to ease the monarch's care.
 The monarch grants. With pride elate,
 Behold him minister of state!
 Around him throng the feather'd rout;
 Friends must be serv'd, and some must out:
 Each thinks his own the best pretension;
 This asks a place, and that a pension;
 The Nightingale was set aside.
 A forward Daw his room supply'd.

75

80

85

90

“ This bird (says he), for business fit,
 Hath both sagacity and wit:
 With all his turns, and shifts, and tricks,
 He's docile, and at nothing sticks:

Then

* —When impious men bear sway,
 The post of honour is a private station.

ADDISON.

F A B L E S. PART II.

129

Then with his neighbours one so free
At all times will connive at me."

95

The Hawk had due distinction shown,
For parts and talents like his own.
Thousands of hireling Cocks attend him,
As blustering bullies, to defend him.

100

At once the Ravens were discarded,
And Magpies with their posts rewarded.

Those fowls of omen I detest,
That pry into another's nest.

State-lyes must lose all good intent,
For they foresee and croak th' event.

105

My friends ne'er think, but talk by rote,
Speak what they 're taught, and so to vote.

" When rogues like these (a Sparrow cries)
To honours and employments rise,

110

I court no favour, ask no place ;
From such, preferment is disgrace.

Within my thatch'd retreat I find

(What these ne'er feel) true peace of mind."

F A B L E III.

THE BABOON AND THE POULTRY.

To a Levee-hunter.

WE frequently misplace esteem,
By judging men by what they seem.
To birth, wealth, power, we should allow
Precedence, and our lowest bow :

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In

In that is due distinction shewn ;
Esteem is Virtue's right alone.

With partial eye we're apt to see
The man of noble pedigree :
We're prepossess'd my Lord inherits,
In some degree, his grandfire's merits ;
For those we find upon record,
But find him nothing but my Lord.

When we, with superficial view,
Gaze on the rich, we're dazzled too.
We know that wealth, well understood,
Hath frequent power of doing good ;
Then fancy that the thing is done,
As if the power and will were one.
'Thus oft' the cheated crowd adore
The thriving knaves that keep them poor.

The cringing train of power survey ;
What creatures are so low as they !
With what obsequiousness they bend !
To what vile actions condescend !
Their rise is on their meanness built,
And flattery is their smallest guilt.
What homage, reverence, adoration,
In every age, in every nation,
Have sycophants to power address'd !
No matter who the power possess'd.
Let ministers be what they will,
You find their levees always fill :
Ev'n those who have perplex'd a state,
Whose actions claim contempt and hate,

Had wretches to applaud their schemes, 35

Though more absurd than madmen's dreams.

When barbarous Moloch was invoc'd,

The blood of infants only smok'd!

But here (unless all history lyes)

Whole realms have been a sacrifice. 40

Look through all courts: 'tis power we find

The general idol of mankind;

There worship'd under every shape:

Alike the lion, fox, and ape,

Are follow'd by time-serving slaves, 45

Rich prostitutes and needy knaves.

Who then shall glory in his post?

How frail his pride, how vain his boast!

The followers of his prosperous hour

Are as unstable as his power. 50

Power, by the breath of Flattery nurs'd,

The more it swells is nearer burst;

The bubble breaks, the gewgaw ends,

And in a dirty tear descends.

Once on a time an ancient maid, 55

By wishes and by time decay'd,

To cure the pangs of restless thought,

In birds and beasts amusement sought:

Dogs, parrots, apes, her hours employ'd;

With these alone she talk'd and toy'd. 60

A huge Baboon her fancy took

(Almost a man in size and look),

He finger'd every thing he found,

And mimick'd all the servants round;

Then, too, his parts and ready wit
 Show'd him for every business fit.
 With all these talents 'twas but just
 That Pug should hold a place of trust;
 So to her favourite was assign'd
 The charge of all her feather'd kind.
 'Twas his to tend them eve and morn,
 And portion out their daily corn.

Behold him now, with haughty stride,
 Assume a ministerial pride.
 The morning rose. In hope of picking,
 Swans, turkeys, peacocks, ducks, and chicken,
 Fowls of all ranks surround his hut,
 To worship his important strut.
 The minister appears. The crowd,
 Now here, now there, obsequious bow'd.
 'This prais'd his parts, and that his face,
 'Th' other his dignity in place.
 From bill to bill the flattery ran:
 He hears and bears it like a man;
 For, when we flatter Self-conceit,
 We but his sentiments repeat.

If we 're too scrupulously just.
 What profit 's in a place of trust;
 The common practice of the great
 Is to secure a snug retreat.

So Pug began to turn his brain
 (Like other folks in place) on gain.

An apple-woman's stall was near,
 Well stock'd with fruits through all the year;

Here

FABLES. PART II.

133

Here every day he cramm'd his guts,
Hence were his hoards of pears and nuts;
For 'twas agreed (in way of trade)
His payments should in corn be made.

95

The stock of grain was quickly spent,
And no account which way it went.

100

Then, too, the Poultry's starv'd condition
Caus'd speculations of suspicion.

The facts were prov'd beyond dispute;
Pug must refund his hoards of fruit;

And, though then minister in chief,
Was branded as a public thief.

105

Disgrac'd, despis'd, confin'd to chains,
He nothing but his pride retains.

A Goose pass'd by; he knew the face,
Seen every levee while in place.

110

"What, no respect! no reverence shown!
How saucy are these creatures grown!
Not two days since (says he) you bow'd
The lowest of my fawning crowd."

"Proud fool! (replies the Goose) 'tis true
Thy corn a fluttering levee drew;

115

For that I join'd the hungry train,
And sold thee flattery for thy grain.
But then, as now, conceited Ape,
We saw thee in thy proper shape."

120

F A B L E IV.

THE ANT IN OFFICE.

To a Friend,

YOU tell me that you apprehend
 My verse may touchy folks offend.
 In prudence, too, you think my rhymes
 Should never squint at courtiers' crimes;
 For though nor this nor that is meant,
 Can we another's thoughts prevent?

You ask me if I ever knew
 Court chaplains thus the lawn pursue?
 I meddle not with gown or lawn;
 Poets, I grant, to rise must fawn;
 They know great ears are over-nice,
 And never shock their patron's vice.
 But I this hackney-path despise;
 'Tis my ambition not to rise.
 If I must prostitute the Muse,
 The base conditions I refuse.

I neither flatter nor defame,
 Yet own I would bring guilt to shame.
 If I Corruption's hand expose,
 I make corrupted men my foes;
 What then? I hate the paltry tribe:
 Be virtue mine; be theirs the bribe.
 I no man's property invade;
 Corruption's yet no lawful trade.

FABLES. PART II.

135

Nor would it mighty ills produce,

25

Could I shame bribery out of use.

I know 'twould cramp most politicians,

Were they ty'd down to these conditions.

'Twould stint their power, their riches bound,

And make their parts seem less profound.

30

Were they deny'd their proper tools,

How could they lead their knaves and fools?

Were this the case, let's take a view

What dreadful mischiefs would ensue.

Though it might aggrandize the state,

35

Could private luxury dine on plate?

Kings might indeed their friends reward,

But ministers find less regard.

Informers, sycophants, and spies,

Would not augment the year's supplies.

40

Perhaps, too, take away this prop,

An annual jobb or two might drop.

Besides, if pensions were deny'd,

Could Avarice support its pride?

It might ev'n ministers confound,

45

And yet the state be safe and sound.

I care not though 'tis understood;

I only mean my country's good:

And (let who will my freedom blame)

I wish all courtiers did the same.

50

Nay, though some folks the less might get,

I wish the nation out of debt.

I put no private man's ambition

With public good in competition:

K 4

Rather

Rather than have our laws defac'd,
I 'd vote a minister disgrac'd. 55

I strike at vice, be 't where it will ;
And what if great folks take it ill ?
I hope corruption, bribery, pension,
One may with detestation mention ; 60
Think you the law (let who will take it)
Can *scandalum magnatum* make it ?
I vent no slander, owe no grudge,
Nor of another's conscience judge :
At him or him I take no aim, 65
Yet dare against all vice declaim.
Shall I not censure breach of trust,
Because knaves know themselves unjust ?
That steward, whose account is clear,
Demands his honour may appear : 70
His actions never shun the light ;
He is, and would be prov'd, upright.

But then you think my Fable bears
Allusion, too, to state-affairs.

I grant it does : and who 's so great, 75
That has the privilege to cheat ?
If then in any future reign
(For ministers may thirst for gain)
Corrupted hands defraud the nation,
I bar no reader's application. 80

An Ant there was, whose forward prate
Control'd all matters in debate ;
Whether he knew the thing or no,
His tongue eternally would go ;

For

F A B L E S. PART II.

137

For he had impudence at will,
 And boasted universal skill.
 Ambition was his point in view:
 Thus by degrees to power he grew.
 Behold him now his drift attain:
 He's made chief treasurer of the grain. 90
 But as their antient laws are just,
 And punish breach of public trust,
 'Tis order'd (lest wrong application
 Should starve that wise industrious nation)
 That all accounts be stated clear, 95
 Their stock, and what defray'd the year;
 That auditors shall these inspect,
 And public rapine thus be check'd.
 For this the solemn day was set;
 The auditors in council met. 100
 The granary-keeper must explain,
 And balance his account of grain.
 He brought (since he could not refuse them)
 Some scraps of paper to amuse them.
 An honest Pismire, warm with zeal, 105
 In justice to the public weal,
 Thus spoke: "The nation's hoard is low;
 From whence does this profusion flow?
 I know our annual funds' amount;
 Why such expence? and where's th' account?" 110
 With wonted arrogance and pride,
 The Ant in office thus reply'd.
 "Consider, Sirs, were secrets told,
 How could the best-schem'd projects hold?
 Should

Should we state mysteries disclose,
 'Twould lay us open to our foes.
 My duty and my well-known zeal
 Bid me our present schemes conceal:
 But, on my honour, all th' expence
 (Though vast) was for the swarm's defence." 120

They past th' account as fair and just,
 And voted him implicit trust.

Next year again, the granary drain'd,
 He thus his innocence maintain'd.

" Think how our present matters stand, 125
 What dangers threat from every hand;
 What hosts of turkeys stroll for food,
 No farmer's wife but hath her brood.
 Consider, when invasion's near,
 Intelligence must cost us dear;
 And, in this ticklish situation,
 A secret told betrays the nation:
 But, on my honour, all th' expence
 (Though vast) was for the swarm's defence." 130

Again, without examination, 135
 They thank'd his sage administration.

The year revolves. Their treasure, spent,
 Again in secret service went.

His honour, too, again was pledg'd,
 To satisfy the charge alledg'd. 140

When thus, with pannic shame possess'd,
 An auditor his friends address'd.

" What are we? ministerial tools!
 We little knaves are greater fools.

F A B L E S. PART II.

139

At last this secret is explor'd,
 'Tis our corruption thins the hoard.
 For every grain we touch'd, at least
 A thousand his own heaps increas'd.
 Then for his kin and favourite spies,
 A hundred hardly could suffice.
 Thus, for a paltry sneaking bribe,
 We cheat ourselves and all the tribe;
 For all the magazine contains
 Grows from our annual toil and pains."

145

150

They vote th' account shall be inspected;
 The cunning plunderer is detected;
 The fraud is sentenc'd; and his hoard,
 As due, to public use restor'd.

155

F A B L E V.

THE BEAR IN A BOAT.

To a Coxcomb.

THAT man must daily wiser grow,
 Whose search is bent himself to know;
 Impartially he weighs his scope,
 And on firm reason founds his hope;
 He tries his strength before the race,
 And never seeks his own disgrace;
 He knows the compass, sail, and oar,
 Or never launches from the shore;
 Before he builds, computes the cost,
 And in no proud pursuit is lost:

5

10

He

He learns the bounds of human sense,
 And safely walks within the fence.
 Thus, conscious of his own defect,
 Are pride and self-importance check'd.

If then, self-knowledge to pursue,
 Direct our life in every view,
 Of all the fools that pride can boast,
 A Coxcomb claims distinction most.

Coxcombs are of all ranks and kind;
 They're not to sex or age confin'd,
 Or rich, or poor, or great, or small,
 And vanity besots them all.

By ignorance is pride increas'd:
 Those most assume, who know the least;
 Their own false balance gives them weight,
 But every other finds them light.

Not that all Coxcombs' follies strike,
 And draw our ridicule alike;
 To different merits each pretends:
 This in love-vanity transcends;
 That, smitten with his face and shape,
 By dress distinguishes the ape;
 Th' other with learning crams his shelf,
 Knows books, and all things but himself.

All these are fools of low condition,
 Compar'd with Coxcombs of ambition:
 For those, puff'd up with flattery, dare
 Assume a nation's various care.

They ne'er the grossest praise mistrust,
 Their sycophants seem hardly just;

15

20

25

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35

40
For

For these, in part alone, attest
The flattery their own thoughts suggest.
In this wide sphere a Coxcomb's shown
In other realms besides his own :

The self-deem'd Machiavel at large

45

By turns controls in every charge.
Does Commerce suffer in her rights ?

'Tis he directs the naval flights.

What sailor dares dispute his skill ?

He'll be an admiral when he will.

50

Now, meddling in the soldier's trade,
Troops must be hir'd, and levies made.

He gives ambassadors their cue,

His cobbled treaties to renew ;

And annual taxes must suffice

55

The current blunders to disguise.

When his crude schemes in air are lost,

And millions scarce defray the cost,

His arrogance (nought undismay'd)

Trusting in self-sufficient aid,

60

On other rocks misguides the realm,

And thinks a pilot at the helm.

He ne'er suspects his want of skill,

But blunders on from ill to ill ;

And, when he fails of all intent,

65

Blames only unforeseen event.

Left you mistake the application,

The Fable calls me to relation.

A Bear of shag and manners rough,

At climbing trees expert enough ;

70

For

For dextrously, and safe from harm,
 Year after year he robb'd the swarm.
 Thus thriving on industrious toil,
 He glory'd in his pilfer'd spoil.

This trick so swell'd him with conceit,
 He thought no enterprize too great.
 Alike in sciences and arts,
 He boasted universal parts :
 Pragmatic, busy, bustling, bold,
 His arrogance was uncontrol'd :
 And thus he made his party good,
 And grew dictator of the wood.

The beasts, with admiration, stare,
 And think him a prodigious Bear.
 Were any common booty got,
 'Twas his each portion to allot :
 For why ? he found there might be picking,
 Ev'n in the carving of a chicken.
 Intruding thus, he by degrees
 Claim'd, too, the butcher's larger fees.
 And now his over-weening pride
 In every province will preside.
 No task too difficult was found :
 His blundering nose misleads the hound.
 In stratagem and subtle arts
 He over-rules the fox's parts.

It chanc'd as, on a certain day,
 Along the bank he took his way,
 A boat, with rudder, sail, and oar,
 At anchor floated near the shore.

75

80

85

90

95

100

He

He stopt, and, turning to his train,
Thus pertly vents his vaunting strain.

“What blundering puppies are mankind,
In every science always blind!

I mock the pedantry of schools: 105

What are their compasses and rules?
From me that helm shall conduct learn,
And man his ignorance discern.”

So saying, with audacious pride,
He gains the Boat, and climbs the side. 110

The beasts, astonish'd, line the strand:
The anchor's weigh'd; he drives from land:
The slack sail shifts from side to side;
The Boat untrimm'd admits the tide.

Borne down, adrift, at random tost, 115

His oar breaks short, the rudder's lost.

The Bear, presuming in his skill,
Is here and there officious still;

Till, striking on the dangerous sands,
Aground the shatter'd vessel stands. 120

To see the bungler thus distress,

The very fishes sneer and jest:

Ev'n gudgeons join in ridicule,

To mortify the meddling fool.

The clamorous watermen appear; 125

Threats, curses, oaths, insult his ear:

Seiz'd, thrash'd, and chain'd, he's dragg'd to land;

Derision shouts along the strand.

F A B L E VI.

THE SQUIRE AND HIS CUR.

To a Country Gentleman.

THE man of pure and simple heart
 Through life disdains a double part:
 He never needs the screen of lies,
 His inward bosom to disguise.
 In vain malicious tongues assail;
 Let envy snarl, let slander rail,
 From Virtue's shield (secure from wound)
 Their blunted venom'd shafts rebound.
 So shines his light before mankind,
 His actions prove his honest mind.
 If in his country's cause he rise,
 Debating senates to advise,
 Unbrib'd, unaw'd, he dares impart
 The honest dictates of his heart.
 No ministerial frown he fears,
 But in his virtue perseveres.

But would you play the politician,
 Whose heart's averse to intuition,
 Your lips at all times, nay, your reason,
 Must be control'd by place and season.
 What statesman could his power support,
 Were lying tongues forbid the court?
 Did princely ears to truth attend,
 What minister could gain his end?

How

FABLES. PART II.

145

How could he raise his tools to place,
And how his honest foes disgrace?

25

That politician tops his part,
Who readily can lye with art :
The man's proficient in his trade ;
His power is strong, his fortune 's made.

30

By that the interest of the throne
Is made subservient to his own :
By that, have kings of old, deluded,
All their own friends for his excluded :
By that, his selfish schemes pursuing,
He thrives upon the public ruin.

35

Antiochus *, with hardy pace,
Provok'd the dangers of the chace ;
And, lost from all his menial train,
Travers'd the wood and pathless plain.
A cottage lodg'd the royal guest ;
The Parthian clown brought forth his best.
The King unknown his feast enjoy'd,
And various chat the hours employ'd.
From wine what sudden friendship springs !
Frankly they talk'd of courts and kings.

40

45

" We country-folks (the Clown replies)
Could ope our gracious monarch's eyes.
The King, (as all our neighbours say)
Might he (God blefs him !) have his way,
Is found at heart, and means our good,
And he would do it if he could.

50

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If

* Plutarch.

If truth in courts were not forbid,
 Nor kings nor subjects would be rid.
 Were he in power, we need not doubt him;
 But, that transferr'd to those about him,
 On them he throws the regal cares;
 And what mind they? Their own affairs.

If such rapacious hands he trust,
 The best of men may seem unjust.
 From kings to cobblers 'tis the same;
 Bad servants wound their master's fame.

In this our neighbours all agree:
 Would the King knew as much as we!"
 Here he stopt short. Repose they fought,
 'The Peasant slept, the Monarch thought.

The courtiers learn'd, at early dawn,
 Where their lost Sovereign was withdrawn.
 The guards' approach our host alarms;
 With gaudy coats the cottage swarms.

The crown and purple robes they bring,
 And prostrate fall before the King.

The Clown was call'd; the royal guest
 By due reward his thanks exprest.

The King then, turning to the crowd,
 Who fawningly before him bow'd,

Thus spoke. "Since, bent on private gain,
 Your counsels first misled my reign,

Taught and inform'd by you alone,
 No truth the royal ear hath known,

Till here conversing: hence, ye crew;
 For now I know myself and you."

Whene'er

FABLES. PART II.

147

Whene'er the royal ear's engrost,
State-lyes but little genius cost.

The favourite then securely robs,

85

And gleans a nation by his jobbs.

Franker and bolder grown in ill,

He daily poisons dares instil ;

And, as his present views suggest,

Inflames and sooths the royal breast.

90

Thus wicked ministers oppress,

When oft' the monarch means redress.

Would kings their private subjects hear,

A minister must talk with fear ;

If honesty oppos'd his views,

95

He dar'd not innocence accuse ;

'Twould keep him in such narrow bound,

He could not right and wrong confound.

Happy were kings, could they disclose

Their real friends and real foes !

100

Were both themselves and subjects known,

A monarch's will might be his own.

Had he the use of ears and eyes,

Knaves would no more be counted wise.

But then a minister might lose

105

(Hard case !) his own ambitious views.

When such as these have vex'd a state,

Pursued by universal hate,

Their false support at once hath fail'd,

And persevering truth prevail'd.

110

Expos'd, their train of fraud is seen ;

Truth will at last remove the screen.

A Country 'Squire, by whim directed,
 'The true stanch dogs of chace neglected.
 Beneath his board no hound was fed: 115
 His hand ne'er stroak'd the spaniel's head,
 A snappish Cur, alone carest,
 By lyes had banish'd all the rest.
 Yap had his ear; and defamation
 Gave him full scope of conversation. 120
 His sycophants must be preferr'd;
 Room must be made for all his herd:
 Wherefore, to bring his schemes about,
 Old faithful servants all must out.

The Cur on every creature flew 125
 (As other great men's puppies do),
 Unless due court to him were shown,
 And both their face and business known:
 No honest tongue an audience found;
 He worried all the tenants round; 130
 For why? he liv'd in constant fear,
 Lest truth by chance should interfere.
 If any stranger dar'd intrude,
 The noisy Cur his heels pursued.
 Now fierce with rage, now struck with dread, 135
 At once he snarl'd, bit, and fled.
 Aloof he bays, with bristling hair,
 And thus in secret growls his fear:
 "Who knows but Truth, in this disguise,
 May frustrate my best-guarded lyes? 140
 Should she (thus mask'd) admittance find,
 That very hour my ruin's sign'd."

Now,

Now, in his howl's continued sound,
Their words were lost, the voice was drown'd.

Ever in awe of honest tongues, 145
Thus every day he strain'd his lungs.

It happen'd, in ill-omen'd hour,
That Yap, unmindful of his power,
Forsook his post, to love inclin'd;
A favourite bitch was in the wind. 150

By her seduc'd, in amorous play,
They frisk'd the joyous hours away.
Thus by untimely love pursuing,
Like Antony he sought his ruin.

For now the 'Squire, unvex'd with noise, 155
An honest neighbour's chat enjoys.

"Be free, says he; your mind impart;
I love a friendly open heart.

Methinks my tenants shun my gate;
Why such a stranger grown of late? 160
Pray tell me what offence they find:
'Tis plain they're not so well inclin'd."

"Turn off your Cur (the Farmer cries)
Who feeds your ear with daily lyes.

His snarling insolence offends: 165
'Tis he that keeps you from your friends.

Were but that faucy puppy checkt,
You'd find again the same respect.

Hear only him, he'll swear it too,
That all our hatred is to you. 170

But learn from us your true estate;
'Tis that curs'd Cur alone we hate."

The 'Squire heard Truth. Now Yap rush'd in;
 The wide hall echoes with his din;
 Yet Truth prevail'd; and, with disgrace, 175
 The dog was cudgel'd out of place.

F A B L E VII.

THE COUNTRYMAN AND JUPITER.

To Myself.

HAVE you a friend (look round and spy)
 So fond, so prepossess'd as I?
 Your faults, so obvious to mankind,
 My partial eyes could never find.
 When by the breath of Fortune blown, 5
 Your airy castles were o'erthrown,
 Have I been ever prone to blame,
 Or mortify'd your hours with shame?
 Was I e'er known to damp your spirit,
 Or twit you with the want of merit? 10
 'Tis not so strange that Fortune's frown
 Still perseveres to keep you down.
 Look round, and see what others do.
 Would you be rich and honest too?
 Have you (like those she rais'd to place) 15
 Been opportunely mean and base?
 Have you (as times requir'd) resign'd
 Truth, honour, virtue, peace of mind?
 If these are scruples, give her o'er;
 Write, practise morals, and be poor. 20

The

The gifts of Fortune truly rate,
Then tell me what would mend your state.

If happiness on wealth were built,
Rich rogues might comfort find in guilt.

As grows the miser's hoarded store, 25
His fears, his wants, increase the more.

Think, Gay, (what ne'er may be the case)
Should Fortune take you into grace,
Would that your happiness augment?
What can she give beyond content? 30

Suppose yourself a wealthy heir,
With a vast annual income clear!
In all the affluence you possess,
You might not feel one care the less.
Might you not then (like others) find 35
With change of fortune change of mind?

Perhaps, profuse beyond all rule,
You might start out a glaring fool;
Your luxury might break all bounds:
Plate, table, horses, stewards, hounds, 40
Might swell your debts: then, lust of play
No regal income can defray.

Sunk is all credit, writs assail,
And doom your future life to gaol.
Or, were you dignify'd with power, 45
Would that avert one pensive hour?

You might give avarice its swing,
Defraud a nation, blind a king:
Then, from the hirelings in your cause
Though daily fed with false applause, 50
Could

Could it a real joy impart?
Great guilt knew never joy at heart.

Is happiness your point in view?
(I mean th' intrinsic and the true)
She nor in camps or courts resides,
Nor in the humble cottage hides;
Yet found alike in every sphere;
Who finds content, will find her there.

O'erspent with toil, beneath the shade,
A Peasant rested on his spade.

"Good Gods! he cries, 'tis hard to bear
This load of life from year to year!
Soon as the morning streaks the skies,
Industrious Labour bids me rise;
With sweat I earn my homely fare,
And every day renews my care."

Jove heard the discontented strain,
And thus rebuk'd the murmuring swain.

"Speak out your wants, then, honest Friend:
Unjust complaints the gods offend,
If you repine at partial Fate,
Instruct me what could mend your state.
Mankind in every station see.

What wish you? tell me what you 'd be."

So said, upborne upon a cloud,
The Clown survey'd the anxious crowd.

"Yon' face of care, says Jove, behold,
His bulky bags are fill'd with gold.
See with what joy he counts it o'er!
That sum to-day hath swell'd his store."

"Were

"Were I that man, (the Peasant cry'd)
What blessing could I ask beside?"

"Hold, says the God; first learn to know
True happiness from outward show.

This optic glass of intuition— 85

Here, take it, view his true condition."

He look'd, and saw the miser's breast

A troubled ocean, ne'er at rest;

Want ever stares him in the face,

And fear anticipates disgrace: 90

With conscious guilt he saw him start;

Extortion gnaws his throbbing heart;

And never, or in thought or dream,

His breast admits one happy gleam.

"May Jove, he cries, reject my prayer, 95

And guard my life from guilt and care!

My soul abhors that wretch's fate.

O keep me in my humble state!

But see, amidst a gawdy crowd,

Yon' minister so gay and proud; 100

On him what happiness attends,

Who thus rewards his grateful friends!"

"First take the glass, the God replies;

Man views the world with partial eyes."

"Good Gods! exclaims the startled wight, 105

Defend me from this hideous fight!

Corruption with corrosive smart

Lies cankering on his guilty heart:

I see him with polluted hand

Spread the contagion o'er the land. 110

Now

Now Avarice with insatiate jaws,
 Now Rapine with her harpy claws,
 His bosom tears. His conscious breast
 Groans with a load of crimes oppress'd.
 See him, mad and drunk with power, 115
 Stand tottering on Ambition's tower.
 Sometimes, in speeches vain and proud,
 His boasts insult the nether crowd;
 Now, seiz'd with giddiness and fear,
 He trembles lest his fall is near." 120

"Was ever wretch like this! he cries;
 Such misery in such disguise!
 The change, O Jove! I disavow;
 Still be my lot the spade and plough."

He next, confirm'd by speculation, 125
 Rejects the lawyer's occupation;
 For he the statesman seem'd in part,
 And bore similitude of heart.
 Nor did the soldier's trade inflame
 His hopes with thirst of spoil and fame. 130
 The miseries of war he mourn'd;
 Whole nations into deserts turn'd.

"By these have laws and rights been brav'd;
 By these was free-born man enslav'd:
 When battles and invasion cease, 135
 Why swarm they in the lands of peace?
 Such change (says he) may I decline;
 The scythe and civil arms be mine!"

Thus, weighing life in each condition,
 The Clown withdrew his rash petition. 140
 When

When thus the God: "How mortals err!

If you true happiness prefer,

'Tis to no rank of life confin'd,

But dwells in every honest mind.

Be justice then your sole pursuit:

145

Plant virtue, and content's the fruit."

So Jove, to gratify the Clown,

Where first he found him, set him down.

FABLE VIII.

THE MAN, THE CAT, THE DOG, AND THE FLY.

To my native Country.

HAIL, happy land! whose fertile grounds
The liquid fence of Neptune bounds;

By bounteous Nature set apart,

The seat of Industry and Art!

O Britain! chosen port of trade,

5

May luxury ne'er thy sons invade!

May never minister (intent

His private treasures to augment)

Corrupt thy state! If jealous foes

Thy rights of commerce dare oppose,

10

Shall not thy fleets their rapine awe?

Who is 't prescribes the ocean law?

Whenever neighbouring states contend,

'Tis thine to be the general friend.

What is 't who rules in other lands?

15

On trade alone thy glory stands;

That

That benefit is unconfin'd,
 Diffusing good among mankind :
 That first gave lustre to thy reigns,
 And scatter'd plenty o'er thy plains :
 'Tis that alone thy wealth supplies,
 And draws all Europe's envious eyes.
 Be commerce, then, thy sole design ;
 Keep that, and all the world is thine.

20

When naval traffic plows the main,
 Who shares not in the merchant's gain ?
 'Tis that supports the regal state,
 And makes the farmer's heart elate :
 The numerous flocks that cloathe the land
 Can scarce supply the loom's demand ;
 Prolific culture glads the fields,
 And the bare heath a harvest yields.

25

30

Nature expects mankind should share
 The duties of the public care.
 Who's born for sloth ? * To some we find
 The ploughshare's annual toil assign'd :
 Some at the sounding anvil glow ;
 Some the swift-sliding shuttle throw ;
 Some, studious of the wind and tide,
 From pole to pole our commerce guide :
 Some (taught by industry) impart
 With hands and feet the works of art ;
 While some, of genius more refin'd,
 With head and tongue assist mankind.

35

40

Each,

* Barrow.

FABLES. PART II.

157

Each, aiming at one common end,
Proves to the whole a needful friend.
Thus, born each other's useful aid,
By turns are obligations paid.

45

The monarch, when his table's spread,
Is to the clown oblig'd for bread ;

50

And, when in all his glory drest,
Owes to the loom his royal vest.

Do not the mason's toil and care
Protect him from th' inclement air ?

Does not the cutler's art supply
The ornament that guards his thigh ?

55

All these, in duty to the throne,
Their common obligations own.

'Tis he (his own and people's cause)
Protects their properties and laws.

60

Thus they their honest toil employ,
And with content the fruits enjoy.

In every rank, or great or small,
'Tis industry supports us all.

The animals, by want oppress'd,
To man their services address'd :

65

While each pursu'd their selfish good,
They hunger'd for precarious food :

Their hours with anxious cares were vext ;
One day they fed, and starv'd the next :

70

They saw that plenty, sure and rife,
Was found alone in social life ;

That mutual industry profess'd,
The various wants of man redress'd.

The

The Cat, half famish'd, lean and weak, 75
Demands the privilege to speak.

“ Well, Pufs, (says Man) and what can you
To benefit the public do ? ”

The Cat replies, “ These teeth, these claws, 80
With vigilance shall serve the cause.
The mouse, destroy'd by my pursuit,
No longer shall your feasts pollute ;
Nor rats, from nightly ambuscade,
With wasteful teeth your stores invade.”

“ I grant, says Man, to general use 85
Your parts and talents may conduce ;
For rats and mice purloin our grain,
And threshers whirl the flail in vain :
Thus shall the Cat, a foe to spoil,
Protect the farmer's honest toil.” 90

Then turning to the Dog, he cry'd,
“ Well, Sir, be next your merits try'd.”

“ Sir, says the Dog, by self-applause
We seem to own a friendless cause. 95
Ask those who know me, if distrust
E'er found me treacherous or unjust ?
Did I e'er faith or friendship break ?
Ask all those creatures ; let them speak.
My vigilance and trusty zeal
Perhaps might serve the public weal. 100
Might not your flocks in safety feed,
Were I to guard the fleecy breed ?
Did I the nightly watches keep,
Could thieves invade you while you sleep ?

The

F A B L E S. PART II.

159

The Man replies. " 'Tis just and right; 105
Rewards such service should requite.

So rare, in property, we find
Trust uncorrupt among mankind,
That, taken in a public view,
The first distinction is your due. 110
Such merits all reward transcend:
Be then my comrade and my friend."

Addressing now the Fly: " From you
What public service can accrue?"

" From me! (the fluttering insect said) 115
I thought you knew me better bred.

Sir, I'm a gentleman. Is 't fit
That I to industry submit?
Let mean mechanics, to be fed,
By business earn ignoble bread; 120
Lost in excess of daily joys,
No thought, no care, my life annoys.

At noon (the lady's matin hour)
I sip the tea's delicious flower.
On cates luxuriously I dine, 125
And drink the fragrance of the vine.
Studious of elegance and ease,
Myself alone I seek to please."

The Man his pert conceit derides,
And thus the useless coxcomb chides: 130

" Hence, from that peach, that downy feat;
No idle fool deserves to eat.

Could you have sapp'd the blushing rind,
And on that pulp ambrosial din'd;

Had

Had not some hand, with skill and toil, 135
 To raise the tree, prepar'd the soil?
 Consider, Sot, what would ensue,
 Were all such worthless things as you.
 You'd soon be forc'd (by hunger stung)
 To make your dirty meals on dung, 140
 On which such despicable need,
 Unpitied, is reduc'd to feed.
 Besides, vain selfish Insect, learn,
 (If you can right and wrong discern)
 That he who, with industrious zeal, 145
 Contributes to the public weal,
 By adding to the common good,
 His own hath rightly understood."
 So saying, with a sudden blow
 He laid the noxious vagrant low. 150
 Crush'd in his luxury and pride,
 The sponger on the publick dy'd.

FABLE IX.

THE JACKALL, LEOPARD, AND OTHER BEASTS.

To a modern Politician.

I GRANT corruption sways mankind;
 That interest, too, perverts the mind;
 That bribes have blinded common sense,
 Foil'd reason, truth, and eloquence:
 I grant you, too, our present crimes 5
 Can equal those of former times.

Against

Against plain facts shall I engage,
To vindicate our righteous age?

I know that in a modern fist

Bribes in full energy subsist.

10

Since then these arguments prevail,

And itching palms are still so frail,

Hence Politicians, you suggest,

Should drive the nail that goes the best;

That it shows parts and penetration,

15

To ply men with the right temptation.

To this I humbly must dissent,

Premising, no reflection's meant.

Does justice or the client's sense

Teach lawyers either side's defence?

20

The fee gives eloquence its spirit;

That only is the client's merit.

Does art, wit, wisdom, or address,

Obtain the prostitute's caresses?

The guinea (as in other trades)

25

From every hand alike persuades.

Man, Scripture says, is prone to evil;

But does that vindicate the devil?

Besides, the more mankind are prone,

The less the devil's parts are shown.

30

Corruption's not of modern date;

It hath been try'd in every state;

Great knaves of old their power have fenc'd;

By places, pensions, bribes, dispens'd;

By these they glory'd in success,

35

And impudently dar'd oppress;

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By

By these despotically they sway'd,
 And slaves extoll'd the hand that pay'd;
 Nor parts nor genius were employ'd,
 By these alone were realms destroy'd.

40

Now see these wretches in disgrace,
 Stript of their treasures, power, and place;
 View them abandon'd and forlorn,
 Expos'd to such reproach and scorn.

What now is all your pride, your boast?
 Where are your slaves, your flattering host!
 What tongues now feed you with applause?
 Where are the champions of your cause?

35

Now ev'n that very fawning train,
 Which shar'd the gleanings of your gain,
 Prefs foremost who shall first accuse
 Your selfish jobbs, your paltry views,
 Your narrow schemes, your breach of trust,
 And want of talents to be just.

50

What fools were these amidst their power!
 How thoughtless of their adverse hour!
 What friends were made? A hireling herd,
 For temporary votes preferr'd.

55

Was it these sycophants to get,
 Your bounty swell'd a nation's debt?
 You're bit: for these, like Swifs, attend;
 No longer pay, no longer friend.

60

The Lion is (beyond dispute)
 Allow'd the most majestic brute;
 His valour and his generous mind
 Prove him superior of his kind:

65

Yet

Yet to Jackalls (as 'tis averr'd)
 Some Lions have their power transferr'd;
 As if the parts of pimps and spies
 To govern forests could suffice. 70

Once, studious of his private good,
 A proud Jackall oppress'd the wood;
 To cram his own insatiate jaws,
 Invaded property and laws.
 The forest groans with discontent, 75
 Fresh wrongs the general hate foment.
 The spreading murmurs reach'd his ear;
 His secret hours were vex'd with fear.
 Night after night he weighs the case,
 And feels the terrors of disgrace. 80

"By friends (says he) I'll guard my feat,
 By those malicious tongues defeat;
 I'll strengthen power by new allies,
 And all my clamorous foes despise."

To make the generous beasts his friends, 85
 He cringes, fawns, and condescends;
 But those repuls'd his abject court,
 And scorn'd oppression to support.
 Friends must be had. He can't subsist.

Bribes shall new profelytes enlist: 90
 But these nought weigh'd in honest paws;
 For bribes confess a wicked cause:
 Yet think not every paw withstands
 What hath prevail'd in human hands.

A tempting turnip's silver skin 95
 Drew a base Hog through thick and thin:

Bought with a Stag's delicious haunch,
 The mercenary Wolf was staunch :
 The convert Fox grew warm and hearty,
 A pullet gain'd him to the party :
 The golden-pippin in his fist,
 A chattering Monkey join'd the list.

100

But soon, expos'd to public hate,
 The favourite's fall redrefs'd the state.
 The Leopard, vindicating right,
 Had brought his secret frauds to light.
 As rats, before the mansion falls,
 Desert late hospitable walls,
 In shoals the servile creatures run,
 To bow before the rising sun.

105

110

The Hog with warmth express'd his zeal,
 And was for hanging those that steal ;
 But hop'd, though low, the public hoard
 Might half a turnip still afford.
 Since saving measures were profess'd,
 A lamb's head was the Wolf's request.
 The Fox submitted, if to touch
 A gosling would be deem'd too much.
 The Monkey thought his grin and chatter
 Might ask a nut, or some such matter.

115

120

“ Ye Hirelings ! hence ! (the Leopard cries)
 Your venal conscience I despise.
 He, who the public good intends,
 By bribes needs never purchase friends.
 Who acts this just, this open part,
 Is propt by every honest heart.

125

Corruption

Corruption now too late has show'd,
 That bribes are always ill-bestow'd ;
 By you your bubbled master's taught,
 Time-serving tools, not friends, are bought." 130

FABLE X.

THE DEGENERATE BEES.

To the Rev. Dr. Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's.

THOUGH courts the practise disallow,
 A friend at all times I'll avow.

In politics I know 'tis wrong ;
 A friendship may be kept too long ;
 And what they call the prudent part, 5
 Is to wear interest next the heart.

As the times take a different face,
 Old friendships should to new give place.

I know, too, you have many foes,
 That owning you is sharing those ; 10
 That every knave in every station,
 Of high and low denomination.

For what you speak, and what you write,
 Dread you at once, and bear you spite.
 Such freedoms in your works are shown, 15
 They can't enjoy what's not their own.

All dunces, too, in church and state,
 In frothy nonsense shew their hate ;

With all the petty scribbling crew
 (And those pert fots are not a few),
 'Gainst you and Pope their envy spurt.
 The booksellers alone are hurt.

Good Gods ! by what a powerful race
 (For blockheads may have power and place)
 Are scandals rais'd, and libels writ !
 To prove your honesty and wit !
 Think with yourself : those worthy men,
 You know, have suffer'd by your pen.
 From them you 've nothing but your due.
 From hence, 'tis plain, your friends are few.
 Except myself, I know of none,
 Besides the wise and good alone.
 To set the case in fairer light,
 My Fable shall the rest recite,
 Which (though unlike our present state)
 I for the moral's sake relate.

A Bee of cunning, not of parts,
 Luxurious, negligent of arts,
 Rapacious, arrogant, and vain,
 Greedy of power, but more of gain,
 Corruption sow'd throughout the hive :
 By petty rogues the great ones thrive.

As power and wealth his views supply'd,
 'Twas seen in overbearing pride.
 With him loud impudence had merit ;
 The Bee of conscience wanted spirit ;
 And those who follow'd honour's rules
 Were laugh'd to scorn for squeamish fools.

Wealth

Wealth claim'd distinction, favour, grace,
And poverty alone was base.

50

He treated industry with slight,
Unless he found his profit by 't.
Rights, laws, and liberties, give way,
To bring his selfish schemes in play.

The swarm forgot the common toil,
To share the gleanings of his spoil.

55

While vulgar souls, of narrow parts,
Waste life in low mechanic arts,

Let us (says he), to genius born,
The drudgery of our fathers scorn.

60

The Wasp and Drone, you must agree,
Live with more elegance than we.

Like gentlemen they sport and play;
No business interrupts the day:

Their hours to luxury they give,
And nobly on their neighbours live.

65

A stubborn Bee, among the swarm,
With honest indignation warm,

Thus from his cell with zeal reply'd:

“ I flight thy frowns, and hate thy pride. 70

The laws our native rights protect;

Offending thee, I those respect.

Shall luxury corrupt the hive,

And none against the torrent strive?

Exert the honour of your race;

75

He builds his rise on your disgrace.

'Tis industry our state maintains;

'Twas honest toil and honest gains

That rais'd our fires to power and fame.
 Be virtuous; save yourselves from shame. 80
 Know that, in selfish ends pursuing,
 You scramble for the public ruin."

He spoke; and, from his cell dismiss'd,
 Was insolently scoff'd and hiss'd.
 With him a friend or two resign'd, 85
 Disdaining the degenerate kind.

"These Drones (says he), these insects vile,
 (I treat them in their proper style)
 May for a time oppress the state:
 They own our virtue by their hate; 90
 By that our merits they reveal,
 And recommend our public zeal;
 Disgrac'd by this corrupted crew,
 We're honour'd by the virtuous few.

F A B L E XI.

THE PACK-HORSE AND THE CARRIER.

To a young Nobleman.

BEGIN, my Lord, in early youth,
 To suffer, nay, encourage truth;
 And blame me not for disrespect,
 If I the flatterer's style reject;
 With that, by menial tongues supply'd, 5
 You're daily cocker'd up in pride.

The

The tree's distinguish'd by the fruit.

Be virtue then your first pursuit ;

Set your great ancestors in view,

Like them deserve the title too ;

10

Like them ignoble actions scorn ;

Let virtue prove you greatly born.

Though with less plate their side-board shone,

Their conscience always was their own ;

They ne'er at levees meanly fawn'd,

15

Nor was their honour yearly pawn'd ;

Their hands, by no corruption stain'd,

The ministerial bribe disdain'd ;

They serv'd the crown with loyal zeal,

Yet, jealous of the public weal,

20

They stood the bulwark of our laws,

And wore at heart their country's cause ;

By neither place or pension bought,

They spoke and voted as they thought.

Thus did your fires adorn their seat ;

25

And such alone are truly great.

If you the paths of learning flight,

You're but a dunce in stronger light.

In foremost rank the coward plac'd,

Is more conspicuously disgrac'd.

30

If you, to serve a paltry end,

To knavish jobs can condescend,

We pay you the contempt that's due ;

In that you have precedence too.

Whence had you this illustrious name ?

35

From virtue and unblemish'd fame.

By

By birth the name alone descends ;
 Your honour on yourself depends :
 'Think not your coronet can hide
 Assuming ignorance and pride.
 Learning by study must be won ;
 'Twas ne'er entail'd from son to son.
 Superior worth your rank requires ;
 For that mankind reveres your fires :
 If you degenerate from your race,
 Their merits heighten your disgrace.

A Carrier, every night and morn,
 Would see his horses eat their corn :
 This funk the hostler's vails, 'tis true ;
 But then his horses had their due.
 Were we so cautious in all cases,
 Small gain would rise from greater places.

The manger now had all its measure ;
 He heard their grinding teeth with pleasure ;
 When all at once confusion rung ;
 They snorted, jostled, bit, and flung.
 A pack-horse turn'd his head aside,
 Foaming, his eye-balls swell'd with pride.

Good Gods ! (says he) how hard 's my lot !
 Is then my high descent forgot ?
 Reduc'd to drudgery and disgrace
 (A life unwworthy of my race),
 Must I, too, hear the vile attacks
 Of ragged scrubs and vulgar hacks ?
 See scurvy Roan, that brute ill-bred,
 Dares from the manger thrust my head !

Shall

Shall I, who boast a noble line,
 On offals of these creatures dine?
 Kick'd by old Ball! so mean a foe?
 My honour suffers by the blow. 70
 Newmarket speaks my grandfire's fame;
 All jockeys still revere his name:
 There, yearly, are his triumphs told,
 There all his massy plates enroll'd.
 45 Whene'er led forth upon the plain, 75
 You saw him with a livery train;
 Returning, too, with laurels crown'd,
 You heard the drums and trumpets found.
 Let it then, Sir, be understood,
 50 Respect's my due, for I have blood." 80
 "Vain-glorious fool! (the Carrier cry'd)
 Respect was never paid to pride.
 Know 'twas thy giddy wilful heart
 Reduc'd thee to this slavish part,
 55 Did not thy headstrong youth disdain 85
 To learn the conduct of the rein?
 Thus coxcombs, blind to real merit,
 In vicious frolics fancy spirit.
 What is 't to me by whom begot,
 60 Thou restive, pert, conceited sot? 90
 Your fires I reverence; 'tis their due;
 But, worthless fool, what's that to you?
 Ask all the Carriers on the road,
 They'll say, thy keeping's ill bestow'd;
 65 Then vaunt no more thy noble race, 95
 That neither mends thy strength or pace.
 What

What profits me thy boast of blood?
 An afs has more intrinsic good.
 By outward show let's not be cheated;
 An afs should like an afs be treated."

100

F A B L E XII.

PAN AND FORTUNE.

To a young Heir.

SOON as your father's death was known,
 (As if th' estate had been their own)
 The gamesters outwardly exprest
 The decent joy within your breast.
 So lavish in your praise they grew,
 As spoke their certain hopes in you.

5

One counts your income of the year,
 How much in ready money clear.

"No house, says he, is more complete;
 The garden's elegant and great.
 How fine the park around it lies!
 The timber's of a noble size.
 Then count his jewels and his plate.
 Besides, 'tis no entail'd estate.
 If cash run low, his lands in fee
 Are, or for sale or mortgage, free."

10

15

Thus they, before you threw the main,
 Seem to anticipate their gain.

Would

Would you, when thieves are known abroad,
Bring forth your treasures in the road? 20

Would not the fool abet the stealth,
Who rashly thus expos'd his wealth?
Yet this you do, whene'er you play
Among the gentlemen of prey.

Could fools to keep their own contrive, 25
On what, on whom, could gamesters thrive?
Is it in charity you game,

To save your worthy gang from shame?
Unless you furnish'd daily bread,
Which way could idleness be fed? 30

Could these professors of deceit
Within the law no longer cheat,
They must run bolder risks for prey,
And strip the traveller on the way.
Thus in your annual rents they share, 35
And 'scape the noose from year to year.

Consider, ere you make the bett,
That sum might cross your taylor's debt.
When you the pilfering rattle shake,
Is not your honour, too, at stake? 40

Must you not by mean lyes evade
To-morrow's duns from every trade;
By promises so often paid,
Is yet your taylor's bill defray'd?
Must you not pitifully fawn 45

To have your butcher's writ withdrawn?
'This must be done. In debts of play,
Your honour suffers no delay;

And

And not this year's and next year's rent
The sons of rapine can content.

Look round, the wrecks of play behold,
Estates dismember'd, mortgag'd, sold!
Their owners now, to gaols confin'd,
Show equal poverty of mind.

Some, who the spoil of knaves were made,
Too late attempt to learn their trade.

Some, for the folly of one hour,
Become the dirty tools of power;

And, with the mercenary list,

Upon court-charity subsist.

You 'll find at last this maxim true,
Fools are the game which knaves pursue.

The forest (a whole century's shade)
Must be one wasteful ruin made:

No mercy's shewn to age or kind;

The general massacre is sign'd.

The park, too, shares the dreadful fate,
For duns grow louder at the gate.

Stern clowns, obedient to the 'squire,
(What will not barbarous hands for hire?)

With brawny arms repeat the stroke;

Fall'n are the elm and reverend oak.

Through the long wood loud axes sound,
And Echo groans with every wound.

To see the desolation spread,
Pan drops a tear, and hangs his head:
His bosom now with fury burns;
Beneath his hoof the dice he spurns.

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F A B L E S. PART II.

175

Cards, too, in peevish passion torn,
The sport of whirling winds are borne.

80

“ To snails inveterate hate I bear,
Who spoil the verdure of the year ;
The caterpillar I detest,
The blooming Spring’s voracious pest ;
The locust, too, whose ravenous band
Spreads sudden famine o’er the land.
But what are these ? the dice’s throw
At once hath laid a forest low.

85

The cards are dealt, the bett is made,
And the wide park hath lost its shade.
Thus is my kingdom’s pride defac’d,
And all its antient glories waste.

90

All this (he cries) is Fortune’s doing :
’Tis thus she meditates my ruin.

By Fortune, that false, fickle jade,
More havock in one hour is made,
Than all the hungry insect race,
Combin’d, can in an age deface.”

95

Fortune, by chance, who near him past,
O’erheard the vile asperision cast.

100

“ Why, Pan, (says she) what ’s all this rant ?
’Tis every country-bubble’s cant.

Am I the patroness of vice ?

Is ’t I who cog or palm the dice ?

Did I the shuffling art reveal,

105

To mark the cards, or range the deal ?

In all th’ employments men pursue,

I mind the least what gamesters do.

There

There may (if computation's just)
 One now and then my conduct trust.
 I blame the fool, for what can I,
 When ninety-nine my power defy?
 These trust alone their fingers' ends,
 And not one stake on me depends,
 Whene'er the gaming-board is set,
 Two classes of mankind are met;
 But, if we count the greedy race,
 The knaves fill up the greater space.
 'Tis a gross error held in schools,
 That fortune always favours fools.
 In play it never bears dispute;
 That doctrine these fell'd oaks confute.
 Then why to me such rancour show?
 'Tis Folly, Pan, that is thy foe.
 By me his late estate he won,
 But he by folly was undone."

F A B L E XIII.

PLUTUS, CUPID, AND TIME.

OF all the burdens man must bear,
 Time seems most galling and severe:
 Beneath this grievous load oppress'd.
 We daily meet some friend distress'd.
 "What can one do? I rose at nine?
 'Tis full six hours before we dine:

Six hours! no earthly thing to do!
Would I had doz'd in bed till two!"

A pamphlet is before him spread,
And almost half a page is read;
Tir'd with the study of the day,
The fluttering sheets are tofs'd away.

10

He opes his snuff-box, hums an air,
Then yawns, and stretches in his chair.

"Not twenty, by the minute-hand!
Good Gods, says he, my watch must stand!

15

How muddling 'tis on books to pore!
I thought I 'ad read an hour or more.
The morning, of all hours, I hate.

One can't contrive to rise too late."

20

To make the minutes faster run,
Then, too, his tiresome self to shun,
To the next coffee-house he speeds,
Takes up the news, some scraps he reads.
Sauntering, from chair to chair he trails;
Now drinks his tea, now bites his nails.

25

He spies a partner of his woe;
By chat afflictions lighter grow;
Each other's grievances they share,
And thus their dreadful hours compare.

30

Says Tom, "Since all men must confess,
That Time lies heavy, more or less,
Why should it be so hard to get,
Till two, a party at Piquet?

Play might relieve the lagging morn:

35

By cards long wintry nights are borne.

Does not Quadrille amuse the fair,
 Night after night, throughout the year?
 Vapours and spleen forgot, at play
 They cheat uncounted hours away."

40

" My case, says Will, then must be hard,
 By want of skill from play debarr'd.
 Courtiers kill time by various ways;
 Dependence wears out half their days.
 How happy these, whose time ne'er stands!
 Attendance takes it off their hands.
 Were it not for this cursed shower,
 The Park had wil'd away an hour.
 At court, without or place or view,
 I daily lose an hour or two:
 It fully answers my design,
 When I have pick'd up friends to dine;
 The tavern makes our burden light;
 Wine puts our time and care to flight.
 At six (hard case!) they call to pay.
 Where can one go? I hate the play.
 From six till ten! unless in sleep,
 One cannot spend the hours so cheap.
 The comedy's no sooner done,
 But some assembly is begun;
 Loitering from room to room I stray,
 Converse, but nothing hear or say:
 Quite tir'd, from fair to fair I roam.
 So soon! I dread the thoughts of home.
 From thence, to quicken slow-pac'd night,
 Again my tavern-friends invite:

45

50

55

60

65

Here,

Here, too, our early mornings pass,
Till drowfy sleep retard the glass."

Thus they their wretched life bemoan,
And make each other's case their own. 70

Consider, friends, no hour rolls on
But something of your grief is gone.
Were you to schemes of business bred,
Did you the paths of learning tread,
Your hours, your days, would fly too fast; 75
You'd then regret the minute past.

Time's fugitive and light as wind:
'Tis indolence that clogs your mind:
That load from off your spirits shake,
You'll own, and grieve for, your mistake. 80
A while your thoughtless spleen suspend,
Then read, and (if you can) attend.

As Plutus, to divert his care,
Walk'd forth one morn to take the air,
Cupid o'ertook his strutting pace. 85
Each star'd upon the stranger's face,
Till recollection set them right,
For each knew th' other but by sight.
After some complimentary talk,
Time met them, bow'd, and join'd their walk. 90
Their chat on various subjects ran,
But most, what each had done for man.

Plutus assumes a haughty air,
Just like our purse-proud fellows here.
"Let kings, says he, let cobblers tell, 95
Whose gifts among mankind excel.

Consider courts; what draws their train?
 Think you 'tis loyalty or gain?
 That statesman hath the strongest hold,
 Whose tool of politics is gold; 100
 By that, in former reigns, 'tis said,
 The knave in power hath senates led:
 By that alone he sway'd debates,
 Enrich'd himself, and beggar'd states.
 Forego your boast. You must conclude, 105
 That's most esteem'd that's most pursued.
 Think, too, in what a woeful plight
 That wretch must live whose pocket's light.
 Are not his hours by want deprest?
 Penurious care corrodes his breast. 110
 Without respect, or love, or friends,
 His solitary day descends."

" You might, says Cupid, doubt my parts,
 My knowledge, too, in human hearts,
 Should I the power of gold dispute, 115
 Which great examples might confute.
 I know, when nothing else prevails,
 Persuasive money seldom fails;
 That beauty, too, (like other wares)
 Its price, as well as conscience, bears. 120
 Then marriage (as of late profess)
 Is but a money-jobb at best.
 Consent, compliance, may be sold;
 But love's beyond the price of gold.
 Smugglers there are, who, by retail, 125
 Expose what they call Love to sale;

Such

Such bargains are an arrant cheat:

You purchase flattery and deceit.

Those who true love have ever try'd

(The common cares of life supply'd) 130

No wants endure, no wishes make,

But every real joy partake.

All comfort on themselves depends;

They want nor power, nor wealth, nor friends.

Love, then, hath every bliss in store; 135

'Tis friendship, and 'tis something more.

Each other every wish they give:

Not to know love, is not to live."

"Or love, or money, (Time reply'd)

Were men the question to decide, 140

Would bear the prize: on both intent,

My boon's neglected or mis-spent.

'Tis I who measure vital space,

And deal out years to human race.

Though little priz'd, and seldom fought, 145

Without me love and gold are nought.

How does the miser time employ?

Did I e'er see him life enjoy?

By me forsook, the hoards he won

Are scatter'd by his lavish son. 150

By me all useful arts are gain'd:

Wealth, learning, wisdom, is attain'd.

Who then would think (since such my power)

That e'er I knew an idle hour?

So subtle and so swift I fly, 155

Love's not more fugitive than I.

Who hath not heard coquettes complain
 Of days, months, years, mis-spent in vain?
 For time misus'd they pine and waste,
 And love's sweet pleasures never taste. 160
 Those who direct their time aright,
 If love or wealth their hopes excite,
 In each pursuit fit hours employ'd,
 And both by time have been enjoy'd.
 How heedless then are mortals grown! 165
 How little is their interest known!
 In every view they ought to mind me,
 For, when once lost, they never find me."

He spoke. The gods no more contest,
 And his superior gift confest, 170
 That Time (when truly understood)
 Is the most precious earthly good.

F A B L E XIV.

THE OWL, THE SWAN, THE COCK, THE SPIDER,
 THE ASS, AND THE FARMER.

To a Mother.

CONVERSING with your sprightly boys,
 Your eyes have spoke the Mother's joys.
 With what delight I've heard you quote
 Their sayings in imperfect note!
 I grant, in body and in mind 5
 Nature appears profusely kind.

Trust

Trust not to that. Act you your part;
 Imprint just morals on their heart;
 Impartially their talents scan:
 Just education forms the man.

10

Perhaps (their genius yet unknown)
 Each lot of life's already thrown;
 That this shall plead, the next shall fight,
 The last assert the church's right.

I censure not the fond intent;
 But how precarious is th' event!
 By talents misapply'd and crost,
 Consider, all your sons are lost.

15

One day (the tale's by Martial penn'd)
 A father thus address'd his friend:

20

"To train my boy, and call forth sense,
 You know I've stuck at no expence;
 I've try'd him in the several arts;
 (The lad, no doubt, hath latent parts)
 Yet, trying all, he nothing knows,
 But, crab-like, rather backward goes.
 Teach me what yet remains undone;
 'Tis your advice shall fix my son."

25

"Sir, says the friend, I've weigh'd the matter;
 Excuse me, for I scorn to flatter:
 Make him (nor think his genius checkt)
 A herald or an architect."

30

Perhaps (as commonly 'tis known)
 He heard th' advice, and took his own.

The boy wants wit; he's sent to school,
 Where learning but improves the fool.

35

The college next must give him parts,
 And cram him with the liberal arts.
 Whether he blunders at the bar,
 Or owes his infamy to war;
 Or if by licence or degree
 The sexton share the doctor's fee;
 Or from the pulpit by the hour
 He weekly floods of nonsense pour;
 We find (th' intent of Nature foil'd)|
 A taylor or a butcher spoil'd.

40

45

Thus ministers have royal boons
 Conferr'd on blockheads and buffoons:
 In spite of nature, merit, wit,
 Their friends for every post were fit.

50

But now let every Muse confess
 That merit finds its due success.
 Th' examples of our days regard;
 Where 's virtue seen without reward?
 Distinguish'd and in place you find
 Desert and worth of every kind.
 Survey the reverend bench, and see
 Religion, learning, piety:
 The patron, ere he recommends,
 Sees his own image in his friend's.
 Is honesty disgrac'd and poor?
 What is 't to us what was before?

55

60

We all of times corrupt have heard,
 When paltry minions were preferr'd;
 When all great offices, by dozens,
 Were fill'd by brothers, sons, and cousins.

65

What

What matter ignorance and pride?
 The man was happily ally'd.
 Provided that his clerk was good,
 What though he nothing understood?
 In church and state the sorry race
 Grew more conspicuous fools in place.
 Such heads, as then a treaty made,
 Had bungled in the cobbler's trade.

70

Consider, Patrons, that such elves
 Expose your folly with themselves.
 'Tis yours, as 'tis the parent's care,
 To fix each genius in its sphere.
 Your partial hand can wealth dispense,
 But never give a blockhead sense.

75

80

An Owl of magisterial air,
 Of solemn voice, of brow austere,
 Assum'd the pride of human race,
 And bore his wisdom in his face;
 Not to depreciate learned eyes,
 I've seen a pedant look as wise.

85

Within a barn, from noise retir'd,
 He scorn'd the world, himself admir'd;
 And, like an ancient sage, conceal'd
 The follies public life reveal'd.

90

Philosophers of old, he read,
 Their country's youth to science bred,
 Their manners form'd for every station,
 And destin'd each his occupation.
 When Xenophon, by numbers brav'd,
 Retreated, and a people sav'd,

95

That

That laurel was not all his own;
 The plant by Socrates was sown.
 To Aristotle's greater name
 The Macedonian ow'd his fame.

100

Th' Athenian bird, with pride replete,
 Their talents equal'd in conceit.
 And, copying the Socratic rule,
 Set up for master of a school.
 Dogmatic jargon learnt by heart,
 Trite sentences, hard terms of art,
 To vulgar ears seem'd so profound,
 They fancy'd learning in the found.

105

The school had fame; the crowded place
 With pupils swarm'd of every race.
 With these the Swan's maternal care
 Had sent her scarce-fledg'd cygent heir:
 The Hen (though fond and loath to part)
 Here lodg'd the darling of her heart:
 The Spider, of mechanic kind,
 Aspir'd to science more refin'd:
 The Asps learnt metaphors and tropes,
 But most on music fix'd his hopes.

110

115

The pupils now, advanc'd in age,
 Were call'd to tread life's busy stage;
 And to the Master 'twas submitted,
 That each might to his part be fitted.

120

“ The Swan, says he, in arms shall shine;
 The soldier's glorious toil be thine.

The Cock shall mighty wealth attain:
 Go, seek it on the stormy main.

125

The

The court shall be the Spider's sphere :
Power, fortune, shall reward him there.

In music's art, the Afs's fame
Shall emulate Corelli's name."

130

Each took the part that he advis'd,
And all were equally despis'd.
A Farmer, at his folly mov'd,
The dull Preceptor thus reprov'd.

"Blockhead, says he, by what you've done, 135
One would have thought them each your son;

For parents, to their offspring blind,
Consult nor parts nor turn of mind,
But ev'n in infancy decree

What this, what th' other son shall be.

140

Had you with judgement weigh'd the case,
Their genius thus had fix'd their place:

The Swan had learnt the sailer's art;

The Cock had play'd the foldier's part;

The Spider in the weaver's trade

145

With credit had a fortune made;

But for the foal, in every class,

The blockhead had appear'd an Afs."

F A B L E XV.

THE COOK-MAID, THE TURNSPIT, AND THE OX.

To a poor Man.

CONSIDER man in every sphere,
 Then tell me, is your lot severe?
 'Tis murmur, discontent, distrust,
 That makes you wretched. God is just.

I grant, the hungry must be fed,
 That toil, too, earns thy daily bread.
 What then? Thy wants are seen and known;
 But every mortal feels his own.

We 're born a restless, needy crew:
 Shew me the happier man than you.

Adam, though blest above his kind,
 For want of social woman pin'd.
 Eve's wants the subtle serpent saw,
 Her fickle taste transgress'd the law:
 Thus fell our fire; and their disgrace
 The curse entail'd on human race.

When Philip's son, by glory led,
 Had o'er the globe his empire spread;
 When altars to his name were dress'd;
 That he was man, his tears confess'd.

The hopes of avarice are check'd:
 The proud man always wants respect.
 What various wants on power attend!
 Ambition never gains its end.

Who

Who hath not heard the rich complain
Of surfeits and corporeal pain?

25

He, barr'd from every use of wealth,
Envies the ploughman's strength and health.

Another, in a beauteous wife

Finds all the miseries of life :

30

Domestic jars and jealous fear

Imbitter all his days with care.

This wants an heir ; the line is lost :

Why was that vain entail engross?

Canst thou discern another's mind ?

35

What is 't you envy ? Envy's blind.

Tell Envy, when she would annoy,

That thousands want what you enjoy.

“ The dinner must be dish'd at one.

Where's this vexatious Turnspit gone ?

40

Unless the skulking Cur is caught,

The surloin's spoilt, and I'm in fault.”

Thus said, (for sure you'll think it fit

That I the Cook-maid's oaths omit)

With all the fury of a cook,

45

Her cooler kitchen Nan forsook :

The broom-stick o'er her head she waves ;

She sweats, she stamps, she puffs, she raves :

The sneaking Cur before her flies ;

She whistles, calls? fair speech she tries.

50

These nought avail. Her choler burns ;

The fist and cudgel threat by turns.

With hasty stride she presses near ;

He slinks aloof, and howls with fear.

“ Was

" Was ever Cur so curs'd ! (he cry'd)
 What star did at my birth preside !
 Am I for life by compact bound
 'To tread the wheel's eternal round ?
 Inglorious task ! of all our race
 No slave is half so mean and base.
 Had Fate a kinder lot assign'd,
 And form'd me of the lap-dog kind,
 I then, in higher life employ'd,
 Had indolence and ease enjoy'd ;
 And, like a gentleman, carest,
 Had been the lady's favourite guest :
 Or were I sprung from spaniel line,
 Was his sagacious nostril mine,
 By me, their never-erring guide,
 From wood and plain their feasts supply'd,
 Knights, 'squires, attendant on my pace,
 Had shar'd the pleasures of the chace.
 Endued with native strength and fire,
 Why call'd I not the lion fire ?
 A lion ! such mean views I scorn :
 Why was I not of woman born ?
 Who dares with reason's power contend ?
 On man we brutal slaves depend :
 'To him all creatures tribute pay,
 And luxury employs his day."

An Ox by chance o'erheard his moan,
 And thus rebuk'd the lazy drone.

" Dare you at partial Fate repine ?
 How kind 's your lot compar'd with mine !

Decreed

F A B L E S. PART II.

191

Decreed to toil, the barbarous knife

85

Hath sever'd me from social life ;

Urg'd by the stimulating goad,

I drag the cumbrous waggon's load :

'Tis mine to tame the stubborn plain,

Break the stiff foil, and house the grain :

90

Yet I without a murmur bear

The various labours of the year.

But then, consider, that one day

(Perhaps the hour 's not far away)

You, by the duties of your post,

95

Shall turn the spit when I 'm the roast ;

And for reward shall share the feast,

I mean, shall pick my bones at least."

" Till now, th' astonish'd Cur replies,

I look'd on all with envious eyes.

100

How false we judge by what appears !

All creatures feel their several cares.

If thus yon' mighty beast complains ;

Perhaps man knows superior pains,

Let envy then no more torment :

105

Think on the Ox, and learn content."

Thus said, close following at her heel,

With cheerful heart he mounts the wheel.

F A B L E XVI.

THE RAVEN, THE SEXTON, AND THE EARTH-
WORM.

To Laura.

LAURA, methinks you 're over-nice.

True; flattery is a shocking vice:

Yet sure, whene'er the praise is just,

One may commend without disgust.

Am I a privilege deny'd,

Indulg'd by every tongue beside?

How singular are all your ways!

A woman, and averse to praise!

If 'tis offence such truths to tell,

Why do your merits thus excel?

Since then I dare not speak my mind,

A truth conspicuous to mankind;

Though in full lustre every grace

Distinguish your celestial face;

Though beauties of inferior ray

(Like stars before the orb of day)

Turn pale and fade; I check my lays,

Admiring what I dare not praise.

If you the tribute due disdain,

The Muse's mortifying strain

Shall, like a woman in mere spite,

Set beauty in a moral light.

Though such revenge might shock the ear

Of many a celebrated fair,

I mean

I mean that superficial race 25
 Whose thoughts ne'er reach beyond their face;
 What's that to you? I but displease
 Such ever-girlish ears as these.
 Virtue can brook the thoughts of age,
 That lasts the same through every stage. 30
 Though you by time must suffer more
 Than ever woman lost before,
 To age is such indifference shown,
 As if your face were not your own.
 Were you by Antoninus taught? 35
 Or is it native strength of thought
 That thus, without concern or fright,
 You view yourself by Reason's light?
 Those eyes, of so divine a ray,
 What are they? Mouldering, mortal clay. 40
 Those features, cast in heavenly mould,
 Shall, like my coarser earth, grow old;
 Like common grass, the fairest flower
 Must feel the hoary season's power.
 How weak, how vain, is human pride! 45
 Dares man upon himself confide?
 The wretch, who glories in his gain,
 Amasses heaps on heaps in vain.
 Why lose we life in anxious cares,
 To lay-in hoards for future years? 50
 Can those (when tortur'd by disease)
 Cheer our sick heart, or purchase ease?
 Can those prolong one gasp of breath,
 Or calm the troubled hour of death?
 VOL. XXXVII. O What's

What's beauty? Call ye that your own? 55
 A flower that fades as soon as blown.
 What's man in all his boast of sway?
 Perhaps the tyrant of a day.

Alike the laws of life take place
 Through every branch of human race. 60
 The monarch of long regal line
 Was rais'd from dust as frail as mine.
 Can he pour health into his veins,
 Or cool the fever's restless pains?
 Can he (worn down in Nature's course) 65
 New-brace his feeble nerves with force?
 Can he (how vain is mortal power!)
 Stretch life beyond the destin'd hour?

Consider, Man; weigh well thy frame;
 The king, the beggar, is the same. 70
 Dust form'd us all. Each breathes his day,
 Then sinks into his native clay.

Beneath a venerable yew,
 That in the lonely church-yard grew,
 Two Ravens sate. In solemn croak 75
 Thus one his hungry friend bespoke.

"Methinks I scent some rich repast;
 The favour strengthens with the blast;
 Snuff then, the promis'd feast inhale;
 I taste the carcase in the gale. 80
 Near yonder trees, the farmer's steed,
 From toil and every drudgery freed,
 Hath groan'd his last. A dainty treat!
 To birds of taste, delicious meat!"

A Sexton,

F A B L E S. PART II.

195

A Sexton, busy at his trade,

85

To hear their chat suspends his spade.

Death struck him with no farther thought,

Than merely as the fees he brought.

" Was ever two such blundering fowls,

In brains and manners less than owls!

90

Blockheads, says he, learn more respect:

Know ye on whom ye thus reflect?

In this same grave (who does me right,

Must own the work is strong and tight)

The 'Squire, that yon' fair hall possessest,

95

To-night shall lay his bones at rest.

Whence could the gross mistake proceed?

The 'Squire was somewhat fat indeed.

What then? the meanest bird of prey

Such want of sense could ne'er betray;

100

For sure some difference must be found

(Suppose the smelling organ sound)

In carcases (say what we can),

Or where's the dignity of man?"

With due respect to human race,

105

The Ravens undertook the case.

In such similitude of scent,

Man ne'er could think reflections meant.

As epicures extol a treat,

And seem their savoury words to eat,

110

They prais'd dead horse, luxurious food!

The venison of the prescient brood.

The Sexton's indignation, mov'd,

The mean comparison reprov'd;

O 2

Their

Their undiscerning palate blam'd,
Which two-legg'd carrion thus defam'd.

115

Reproachful speech from either side
The want of argument supply'd:
They rail, revile; as often ends
The contest of disputing friends.

120

“ Hold, says the Fowl; since human pride
With confutation ne'er comply'd,
Let's state the case, and then refer
The knotty point, for taste may err.”

As thus he spoke, from out the mould
An Earth-worm, huge of size, unroll'd
His monstrous length: they strait agree
To chuse him as their referee:

125

So to th' experience of his jaws
Each states the merits of the cause.

130

He paus'd; and, with a solemn tone,
Thus made his sage opinion known:

“ On carcases of every kind
This maw hath elegantly din'd;
Provok'd by luxury or need,
On beast, or fowl, or man, I feed:
Such small distinction's in the favour,
By turns I chuse the fancy'd flavour:
Yet I must own (that human beast!)

135

A glutton is the rankest feast.
Man, cease this boast; for human pride
Hath various tracts to range beside.
The prince who kept the world in awe,
The judge whose dictate fix'd the law,

140

The

FABLES. PART H.

197

The rich, the poor, the great, the small,
Are levell'd; death confounds them all.

145

Then think not that we reptiles share
Such cates, such elegance of fare;
The only true and real good

Of man was never vermin's food:

150

'Tis seated in th' immortal mind;

Virtue distinguishes mankind,

And that (as yet ne'er harbour'd here)

Mounts with the soul we know not where.

So, Good-man Sexton, since the case

155

Appears with such a dubious face,

To neither I the cause determine,

For different tastes please different vermin."

END OF THE SECOND PART.

A Y E A N D N O.

A F A B L E *.

IN Fable all things hold discourse,
 Then Words, no doubt, must talk of course,
 Once on a time, near Cannon-row,
 Two hostile adverbs, Aye and No,
 Were hastening to the field of fight,
 And front to front stood opposite;
 Before each general join'd the van,
 Aye, the more courteous knight, began.
 " Stop, peevish Particle! beware!
 I'm told you are not such a bear,
 But sometimes yield when offer'd fair.
 Suffer yon' folks awhile to tattle;
 'Tis we who must decide the battle.
 Whene'er we war on yonder stage,
 With various fate and equal rage,
 The nation trembles at each blow
 That No gives Aye, and Aye gives No;
 Yet, in expensive long contention,
 We gain nor office, grant, or pension.
 Why then should kinsfolks quarrel thus?
 (For two of you make one of us.)

* Taken from the Miscellanies published by Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope.

To some wise statesman let us go,
 Where each his proper use may know:
 He may admit two such commanders,
 And make those wait who serv'd in Flanders. 25
 Let 's quarter on a great man's tongue,
 A treasury lord, not Maister Young.
 Obsequious at his high command,
 Aye shall march forth to tax the land;
 Impeachments No can best resist, 30
 And Aye support the Civil list:
 Aye, quick as Cæsar, wins the day,
 And No, like Fabius, by delay.
 Sometimes in mutual fly disguise,
 Let Aye's seem No's, and No's seem Aye's; 35
 Aye's be in courts denials meant,
 And No's in bishops give consent."
 Thus Aye propos'd—and, for reply,
 No, for the first time, answer'd Aye.
 They parted with a thousand kisses, 40
 And fight e'er since for pay, like Swisses.

DUKE UPON DUKE*:
 AN EXCELLENT NEW BALLAD.
 TO THE TUNE OF, CHEVY-CHACE.

TO lordlings proud I tune my lay,
 Who feast in bower or hall:
 Though dukes they be, to dukes I say,
 That pride will have a fall.

Now that this same it is right sooth,
 Full plainly doth appear,
 From what befel John Duke of Guise †,
 And Nic of Lancaſtere ‡.

When Richard Cœur-de-Lion reign'd,
 (Which means a lion's heart)
 Like him his barons rag'd and roar'd;
 Each play'd a lion's part.

A word and blow was then enough:
 Such honour did them prick,
 If you but turn'd your cheek, a cuff;
 And, if your a—ſe, a kick.

Look

* This humorous Ballad is aſcribed to Mr. Gay on conjecture only. It is among the Miscellanies published by Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope; is there marked as *not* the Dean's; and has never been conſidered as Mr. Pope's. N.

† Sir John Guise. N.

‡ Nicholas Lord Lechmere, Chancellor of the Dutchy of Lancaſter. N.

Look in their face, they tweak'd your nose,
At every turn fell to 't;
Come near, they trod upon your toes;
They fought from head to foot.

Of these the duke of Lancastere
Stood paramount in pride;
He kick'd and cuff'd, and tweak'd and trod
His foes, and friends beside.

Firm on his front his beaver fate;
So broad, it hid his chin;
For why? he deem'd no man his mate,
And fear'd to tan his skin.

With Spanish wool he dy'd his cheek,
With essence oil'd his hair;
No vixen civet-cat so sweet,
Nor could so scratch and tear.

Right tall he made himself to show,
Though made full short by God:
And, when all other dukes did bow,
This duke did only nod.

Yet courteous, blithe, and debonnair,
To Guise's duke was he:
Was ever such a loving pair?
How could they disagree?

Oh, thus it was: he lov'd him dear,
And cast how to requite him;
And having no friend left but this,
He deem'd it meet to fight him.

Forth-

Forthwith he drench'd his desperate quill,

And thus he did indite :

“ This eve at whist ourself will play,

“ Sir Duke ! be here to-night.”

“ Ah no ! ah no !” the guileless Guise

Demurely did reply ;

“ I cannot go, nor yet can stand,

“ So fore the gout have I.”

The duke in wrath call'd for his steeds,

And fiercely drove them on ;

Lord ! lord ! how rattled then thy stones,

O kingly Kensington * !

All in a trice he rush'd on Guise,

Thrust out his lady dear ;

He tweak'd his nose, trod on his toes,

And smote him on the ear.

But mark, how midst of victory

Fate plays her old dog-trick !

Up leap'd duke John, and knock'd him down,

And so down fell duke Nic.

Alas, oh Nic ! oh Nic, alas !

Right did thy gossip call thee :

As who should say, alas the day

When John of Guise shall maul thee !

For on thee did he clap his chair,

And on that chair did sit ;

And look'd as if he meant therein

To do — what was not fit.

Up

* Lord Lechmere lived at Camden-house, near Kensington. N.

Up didst thou look, oh woeful duke !

Thy mouth yet durst not ope,
Certes for fear of finding there
A t—d instead of trope.

“ Lie there, thou caitiff vile !” quoth Guise,

“ No *sheet* is here to save thee :

“ The casement it is shut likewise ;

“ Beneath my feet I have thee.

“ If thou hast aught to speak, speak out,”

Then Lancaftere did cry,

“ Know’st thou not me, nor yet thyself ?

“ Who thou, and who am I ?

“ Know’st thou not me, who (God be prais’d)

“ Have brawl’d and quarrel’d more,

“ Than all the line of Lancaftere,

“ That battled heretofore ?

“ In senates fam’d for many a speech,

“ And (what some awe must give ye,

Though laid thus low beneath thy breach)

“ Still of the council privy ;

“ Still of the *dutchy* chancellor :

“ *Durante* life I have it ;

“ And turn, as now thou dost on me,

“ Mine a—e on them that gave it.”

But now the servants they rush’d in ;

And duke Nic. up leap’d he :

“ I will not cope against such odds,

“ But, Guise ! I’ll fight with thee :

“ To-morrow

“ To-morrow with thee will I fight
“ Under the green-wood tree.”
“ No, not to-morrow, but to-night”
(Quoth Guise) “ I ’ll fight with thee.”

And now the sun declining low
Bestreak’d with blood the skies;
When, with his sword at faddle-bow,
Rode forth the valiant Guise.

Full gently pranc’d he o’er the lawn,
Oft’ roll’d his eyes around,
And from the stirrup stretch’d to find
Who was not to be found.

Long brandish’d he the blade in air,
Long look’d the field all o’er:
At length he spy’d the merry-men brown,
And eke the coach and four.

From out the boot bold Nicholas
Did wave his wand so white,
As pointing out the gloomy glade
Wherein he meant to fight.

All in that dreadful hour so calm
Was Lancastere to see,
As if he meant to take the air,
Or only take a fee:

And so he did — for to New Court
His rolling wheels did run:
Not that he shunn’d the doubtful strife;
But *business* must be done,

Back in the dark, by Brompton-park,
He turn'd up through the Gore !
So slunk to Camden-house so high,
All in his coach and four.

Mean-while duke Guise did fret and fume,
A fight it was to see,
Benumb'd beneath the evening dew
Under the green-wood tree.

Then, wet and weary, home he far'd,
Sore muttering all the way,
" The day I meet him, Nic shall rue
" The cudgel of that day.

" Mean time on every pissing-post
" Paste we this recreant's name,
" So that each pisser-by shall read
" And pifs against the fame."

Now God preserve our gracious king,
And grant his nobles all
May learn this lesson from duke Nic.
That *pride will have a fall !*

P A

D I O N E.

A

PASTORAL TRAGEDY.

“Sunt numina amanti,
“Sævit et injusâ lege relicta Venus.”

TIBULL. Eleg. v. Lib. I.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

EVANDER under the name of LYCIDAS.
CLEANTHES.
Shepherds.

WOMEN.

DIONE under the name of ALEXIS.
PARTHENIA.
LAURA.

Scene, ARCADIA.

A Plai

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ACT I. SCENE I.

A Plain, at the Foot of a steep craggy Mountain.

DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

WHY dost thou fly me? Stay, unhappy fair,
 Seek not these horrid caverns of despair;
 To trace thy steps, the midnight air I bore,
 Trod the brown desert, and unshelter'd moor:
 Three times the lark has sung his matin lay,
 And rose on dewy wing to meet the day,
 Since first I found thee, stretch'd in pensive mood,
 Where laurels border Ladon's silver flood.

DIONE.

O let my soul with grateful thanks o'erflow!
 'Tis to thy hand my daily life I owe.
 Like the weak lamb, you rais'd me from the plain,
 Too faint to bear bleak winds and beating rain;
 Each day I share thy bowl and clean repast,
 Each night thy roof defends the chilly blast.
 But vain is all thy friendship, vain thy care;
 Forget a wretch abandon'd to despair.

LAURA.

Despair will fly thee, when thou shalt impart
 The fatal secret that torments thy heart;

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P

Disclose

Disclose thy sorrows to my faithful ear,
 Instruct these eyes to give thee tear for tear.
 Love, love's the cause; our forests speak thy flame,
 The rocks have learnt to sigh Evander's name.
 If faltering shame thy bashful tongue restrain,
 If thou hast look'd, and blush'd, and sigh'd in vain;
 Say, in what grove thy lovely shepherd strays,
 Tell me what mountains warble with his lays;
 Thither I'll speed me; and with moving art
 Draw soft confessions from his melting heart.

DIONE.

Thy generous care has touch'd my secret woe.
 Love bids these scalding tears incessant flow.
 Ill-fated love! O say, ye sylvan maids,
 Who range wide forests and sequester'd shades,
 Say where Evander bled, point out the ground
 That yet is purple with the savage wound.
 Yonder he lies; I hear the bird of prey;
 High o'er those cliffs the raven wings his way;
 Hark how he croaks! he scents the murder near.
 O may no greedy beak his visage tear!
 Shield him, ye Cupids; strip the Paphian grove,
 And strow unfading myrtle o'er my love!
 Down, heaving heart.

LAURA.

—The mournful tale disclose.

DIONE.

Let not my tears intrude on thy repose.
 Yet if thy friendship still the cause request;
 I'll speak, though sorrow rend my labouring breast.

Know

Know then, fair shepherdes, no honest swain
 Taught me the duties of the peaceful plain;
 Unus'd to sweet content, no flocks I keep,
 Nor browsing goats that overhang the steep.
 Born where Orchomenos' proud turrets shine,
 I trace my birth from long illustrious line,
 Why was I train'd amidst Arcadia's court?
 Love ever revels in that gay resort.
 Whene'er Evander past, my smitten heart
 Heav'd frequent sighs, and felt unusual smart.
 Ah! hadst thou seen with what sweet grace he mov'd!
 Yet why that wish? for Laura then had lov'd.

LAURA.

Distrust me not; thy secret wrongs impart.

DIONE.

Forgive the fallies of a breaking heart.
 Evander's sighs his mutual flame confess,
 The growing passion labour'd in his breast;
 To me he came; my heart with rapture sprung.
 To see the blushes, when his faltering tongue
 First said, I love. My eyes consent reveal,
 And plighted vows our faithful passion seal:
 Where's now the lovely youth; he's lost, he's slain,
 And the pale corse lies breathless on the plain!

LAURA.

Are thus the hopes of constant lovers paid?
 If thus—ye Powers, from love defend the maid!

P 2

DIONE.

DIONE.

Now have twelve mornings warm'd the purple east,
 Since my dear hunter rouz'd the tusky beast;
 Swift flew the foaming monster through the wood,
 Swift as the wind, his eager steps pursued:
 'Twas then the savage turn'd; then fell the youth,
 And his dear blood distain'd the barbarous tooth.

LAURA.

Was there none near? no ready succour found?
 Nor healing herb to staunch the spouting wound?

DIONE.

In vain through pathless woods the hunters crost,
 And fought with anxious eye their master lost;
 In vain their frequent hollows echo'd shrill,
 And his lov'd name was sent from hill to hill;
 Evander hears you not. He's lost, he's slain,
 And the pale corse lies breathless on the plain.

LAURA.

Has yet no clown (who, wandering from the way,
 Beats every bush to raise the lamb astray)
 Observ'd the fatal spot?

DIONE.

— O, if ye pass
 Where purple murder dyes the wither'd grass,
 With pious finger gently close his eyes,
 And let his grave with decent vedure rise. [*Weeps.*]

LAURA.

Behold the turtle who has lost her mate;
 Awhile with drooping wing she mourns his fate;

Sullen,

Sullen, awhile she seeks the darkest grove,
 And cooing meditates the murder'd dove;
 But time the rueful image wears away,
 Again she's chear'd, again she seeks the day.
 Spare then thy beauty, and no longer pine.

D I O N E.

Yet sure some turtle's love has equal'd mine,
 Who, when the hawk has snatch'd her mate away,
 Hath never known the glad return of day.

When my fond father saw my faded eye,
 And on my livid cheek the roses die;
 When catching sighs my wasted bosom mov'd,
 My looks, my sighs, confirm'd him that I lov'd.
 He knew not that Evander was my flame,
 Evander dead! my passion still the same!
 He came, he threaten'd; with paternal sway,
 Cleanthes nam'd, and fix'd the nuptial day:
 O cruel kindness! too severely prest!
 I scorn his honours, and his wealth detest.

L A U R A.

How vain is force! Love ne'er can be compell'd.

D I O N E.

Though bound my duty, yet my heart rebell'd.
 One night, when sleep had hush'd all busy spies,
 And the pale moon had journey'd half the skies,
 Softly I rose and dress'd; with silent tread,
 Unbarr'd the gates, and to these mountains fled.
 Here let me sooth the melancholy hours!
 Close me, ye woods, within your twilight bowers!

Where my calm soul may settled sorrow know,
And no Cleanthes interrupt my woe
With importuning love —

[Melancholy Music is heard at a distance.]

On yonder plain
Advances slow a melancholy train;
Black cypress boughs their drooping heads adorn.

LAURA.

Alas! Menalcas to his grave is borne.
Behold the victim of Parthenia's pride!
He saw, he sigh'd, he lov'd, was scorn'd, and dy'd.

DIONE.

Where dwells this beauteous tyrant of the plains?
Where may I see her?

LAURA.

— Ask the sighing swains.
'They best can speak the conquests of her eyes;
Whoever sees her, loves; who loves her, dies.

DIONE.

Perhaps untimely fate her flame hath cross'd,
And she, like me, hath her Evander lost.
How my soul pities her!

LAURA.

— If pity move
Your generous bosom, pity those who love.
There late arriv'd among our sylvan race
A stranger shepherd, who with lonely pace
Visits those mountain-pines at dawn of day,
Where oft' Parthenia takes her early way

To rouse the chace ; mad with his amorous pain,
 He stops and raves ; then fullen walks again.
 Parthenia's name is borne by passing gales,
 And talking hills repeat it to the dales.
 Come, let us from this vale of sorrow go,
 Nor let the mournful scene prolong thy woe. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II. *

Shepherds and Shepherdesses (crowned with garlands of cypress and yew) bearing the body of Menalcas.

I SHEPHERD.

Here gently rest the corse — With faltering breath
 Thus spake Menalcas on the verge of death.

“ Belov'd Palemon, hear a dying friend ;
 “ See, where yon hills with craggy brows ascend,
 “ Low in the valley where the mountain grows,
 “ There first I saw her, there began my woes.
 “ When I am cold, may there this clay be laid !
 “ There often strays the dear, the cruel maid ;
 “ There as she walks, perhaps you 'll hear her say,
 “ (While a kind gushing tear shall force its way)
 “ How could my stubborn heart relentless prove ?
 “ Ah, poor Menalcas — all thy fault was love !”

2 SHEPHERD.

When pitying lions o'er a carcase groan,
 And hungry tigers bleeding kids bemoan ;

P 4

When

* This and the following scene are formed upon the novel of Marcella in Don Quixote.

When the lean wolf laments the mangled sheep;
Then shall Parthenia o'er Menalcas weep.

I SHEPHERD.

When famish'd panthers seek their morning food,
And monsters roar along the desert wood;
When hissing vipers rustle through the brake,
Or in the path-way rears the speckled snake;
The wary swain th' approaching peril spies,
And through some distant road securely flies.
Fly then, ye swains, from beauty's surer wound.
Such was the fate our poor Menalcas found!

2 SHEPHERD.

What shepherd does not mourn Menalcas slain!
Kill'd by a barbarous woman's proud disdain!
Whoe'er attempts to bend her scornful mind,
Cries to the deserts, and pursues the wind.

I SHEPHERD.

With every grace Menalcas was endow'd,
His merits dazzled all the sylvan croud.
If you would know his pipe's melodious sound,
Ask all the echoes of these hills around,
For they have learnt his strains; who shall rehearse
The strength, the cadence of his tuneful verse?
Go, read those lofty poplars; there you'll find
Some tender sonnet grow on every rind.

2 SHEPHERD.

Yet what avails his skill? Parthenia flies.
Can merit hope success in woman's eyes?

I SHEPHERD.

Why was Parthenia form'd of softest mould?
Why does her heart such savage nature hold?
O ye kind gods! or all her charms efface,
Or tame her heart — so spare the shepherd race.

2 SHEPHERD.

As fade the flowers which on the grave I cast;
So may Parthenia's transient beauty waste!

I SHEPHERD.

What woman ever counts the fleeting years,
Or sees the wrinkle which her forehead wears?
Thinking her features never shall decay,
This swain she scorns, from that she turns away.
But know, as when the rose her bud unfolds,
Awhile each breast the short-liv'd fragrance holds;
When the dry stalk lets drop her shrivel'd pride,
The lovely ruin's ever thrown aside.
So shall Parthenia be.

2 SHEPHERD.

— See, she appears,
To boast her spoils, and triumph in our tears.

SCENE

SCENE III.

Parthenia appears from the mountain.

PARTHENIA. SHEPHERDS.

I SHEPHERD.

Why this way dost thou turn thy baneful eyes,
Pernicious Basilisk? Lo! there he lies:
There lies the youth thy curst beauty slew;
See, at thy presence, how he bleeds anew!
Look down, enjoy thy murder.

PARTHENIA.

— Spare my fame;

I come to clear a virgin's injur'd name.
If I'm a Basilisk, the danger fly,
Shun the swift glances of my venom'd eye:
If I'm a murderer, why approach ye near,
And to the dagger lay your bosom bare?

I SHEPHERD.

What heart is proof against that face divine?
Love is not in our power.

PARTHENIA.

— Is love in mine?

If e'er I trifled with a shepherd's pain,
Or with false hope his passion strove to gain;
Then might you justly curse my savage mind,
Then might you rank me with the serpent kind:

But

But I ne'er trifled with a shepherd's pain,
 Nor with false hope his passion strove to gain:
 'Tis to his rash pursuit he owes his fate;
 I was not cruel; he was obstinate.

I SHEPHERD.

Hear this, ye sighing shepherds, and despair.
 Unhappy Lycidas, thy hour is near!
 Since the same barbarous hand hath sign'd thy doom,
 We'll lay thee in our lov'd Menalcas' tomb.

PARTHENIA.

Why will intruding man my peace destroy?
 Let me content and solitude enjoy;
 Free was I born; my freedom to maintain,
 Early I sought the unambitious plain.
 Most women's weak resolves, like reeds, will ply,
 Shake with each breath, and bend with every sigh;
 Mine, like an oak, whose firm roots deep descend,
 Nor breath of love can shake, nor sigh can bend.
 If ye unhappy Lycidas would save;
 Go seek him, lead him to Menalcas' grave;
 Forbid his eyes with flowing grief to rain,
 Like him Menalcas wept, but wept in vain:
 Bid him his heart-consuming groans give o'er:
 Tell him, I heard such piercing groans before,
 And heard unmov'd. O Lycidas, be wise,
 Prevent thy fate. — Lo! there Menalcas lies.

I SHEPHERD.

Now all the melancholy rites are paid,
 And o'er his grave the weeping marble laid;

Let's

Let's seek our charge; the flocks, dispersing wide,
Whiten with moving fleece the mountain's side.
Trust not, ye swains, the lightning of her eye,
Lest ye, like him, should love, despair, and die.

[*Exeunt* Shepherds, &c. Parthenia remains in a melancholy posture, looking on the grave of Menalcas.

Enter LYCIDAS.

SCENE IV.

LYCIDAS, PARTHENIA.

LYCIDAS.

When shall my steps have rest? through all the wood,
And by the winding banks of Ladon's flood,
I sought my love. O say, ye skipping fawns
(Who range entangled shades and daisy'd lawns),
If ye have seen her! say, ye warbling race
(Who measure on swift wing th' aerial space,
And view below hills, dales, and distant shores),
Where shall I find her whom my soul adores!

SCENE V.

LYCIDAS, PARTHENIA, DIONE, LAURA.

[*Dione and Laura at a distance.*

LYCIDAS.

What do I see? no. Fancy mocks my eyes,
And bids the dear deluding vision rise.

'Tis

'Tis she. My springing heart her presence feels.
See, prostrate Lycidas before thee kneels.

[*Kneeling to Parthenia.*

Why will Parthenia turn her face away?

PARTHENIA.

Who calls Parthenia? hah!

[*She starts from her melancholy; and, seeing Lycidas, flies into the wood.*

LYCIDAS.

——Stay, virgin, stay.

O wing my feet, kind Love. See, see, she bounds,
Fleet as the mountain roe, when prest by hounds.

[*He pursues her. Dione faints in the arms of Laura.*

LAURA.

What means this trembling? All her colour flies,
And life is quite unstrung. Ah! lift thy eyes,
And answer me; speak, speak, 'tis Laura calls.
Speech has forsook her lips. — She faints, she falls.
Fan her, ye zephyrs, with your balmy breath,
And bring her quickly from the shades of death:
Blow, ye cool gales. See, see, the forest shakes
With coming winds! she breathes, she moves, she
wakes.

DIONE.

Ah, false Evander!

LAURA.

——Calm thy sobbing breast.

Say, what new sorrow has thy heart oppress?

DIONE.

DIONE.

Didst thou not hear his sighs and suppliant tone?
 Didst thou not hear the pitying mountain groan?
 Didst thou not see him bend his suppliant knee?
 Thus in my happy days he knelt to me,
 And pour'd forth all his soul! See how he strains,
 And lessens to the fight o'er yonder plains,
 To keep the fair in view! Run, virgin, run,
 Hear not his vows; I heard, and was undone!

LAURA.

Let not imaginary terrors fright.
 Some dark delusion swims before thy sight.
 I saw Parthenia from the mountain's brow,
 And Lyeidas with prostrate duty bow;
 Swift, as the falcon's wing, I saw her fly,
 And heard the cavern to his groans reply.
 Why stream thy tears for sorrows not thy own?

DIONE.

Oh! where are honour, faith, and justice flown?
 Perjur'd Evander!

LAURA.

—Death has laid him low.
 Touch not the mournful string that wakes thy woe.

DIONE.

That amorous swain, whom Lycidas you name,
 (Whose faithless bosom feels another flame)
 Is my once kind Evander — yes — 'twas he.
 He lives — but lives, alas! no more for me.

LAURA.

LAURA.

Let not thy frantic words confess despair.

DIONE.

What, know I not his voice, his mien, his air?
Yes, I that treacherous voice with joy believ'd,
That voice, that mien, that air, my soul deceiv'd.
If my dear shepherd love the lawns, and glades,
With him I'll range the lawns, and seek the shades,
With him through solitary deserts rove.
But could he leave me for another love?
O base ingratitude!

LAURA.

— Suspend thy grief,

And let my friendly counsel bring relief
To thy desponding soul. Parthenia's ear
Is barr'd for ever to the lover's prayer;
Evander courts disdain, he follows scorn,
And in the passing winds his vows are borne.
Soon will he find that all in vain he strove
To tame her bosom; then his former love
Shall wake his soul; then will he sighing blame
His heart inconstant, and his perjur'd flame:
Then shall he at Dione's feet implore,
Lament his broken faith, and change no more.

DIONE.

Perhaps this cruel nymph well knows to feign
Forbidding speech, coy looks, and cold disdain,
To raise his passion. Such are female arts,
To hold in safer snares inconstant hearts!

LAURA.

LAURA.

Parthenia's breast is steel'd with real scorn.

DIONE.

And dost thou think Evander will return?

LAURA.

Forego thy sex, lay all thy robes aside,
Strip off these ornaments of female pride;
The shepherd's vest must hide thy graceful air,
With the bold manly step a swain appear;
Then with Evander may'st thou rove unknown,
Then let thy tender elegance be shown;
Then the new fury of his heart control,
And with Dione's sufferings touch his soul.

DIONE.

Sweet as refreshing dews, or summer showers,
To the long parching thirst of drooping flowers;
Grateful as fanning gales to fainting swains.
And soft as trickling balm to bleeding pains;
Such are thy words. The sex shall be resign'd,
No more shall braided gold these tresses bind;
The shepherd's garb the woman shall disguise.
If he has lost all love, may friendship's ties
Unite me to his heart!

LAURA.

— Go, prosperous maid,
May smiling love thy faithful wishes aid!
Be now Alexis call'd. With thee I'll rove,
And watch thy wanderer through the mazy grove:

Let

Let me be honour'd with a sister's name;
For thee, I feel a more than sister's flame.

DIONE.

Perhaps my shepherd has outstript her haste.
Think'st thou, when out of sight, she flew so fast?
One sudden glance might turn her savage mind;
May she like Daphne fly, nor look behind,
Maintain her scorn, his eager flame despise,
Nor view Evander with Dione's eyes!

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

Lycidas lying on the grave of Menalcas.

LYCIDAS.

WHEN shall these scalding fountains cease to flow?
 How long will life sustain this load of woe?
 Why glows the morn? Roll back, thou source of light,
 And feed my sorrows with eternal night.
 Come, fable Death! give, give the welcome stroke;
 The raven calls thee from yon' blasted oak.
 What pious care my ghastful lid shall close?
 What decent hand my frozen limbs compose?
 O happy shepherd, free from anxious pains,
 Who now art wandering in the fighting plains
 Of blest Elysium; where in myrtle groves
 Enamour'd ghosts bemoan their former loves.
 Open, thou silent grave; for lo! I come
 To meet Menalcas in the fragrant gloom;
 There shall my bosom burn with friendship's flame,
 The same our passion, and our fate the same;
 There, like two nightingales on neighbouring boughs,
 Alternate strains shall mourn our frustrate vows.
 But if cold death should close Parthenia's eye,
 And should her beauteous form come gliding by;
 Friendship would soon in jealous fear be lost,
 And kindling hate pursue thy rival ghost.

S C E N E

S C E N E II.

LYCIDAS, DIONE *in a Shepherd's Habit.*

LYCIDAS.

Hah! who comes here? turn hence, be timely wise;
Trust not thy safety to Parthenia's eyes.
As from the bearing falcon flies the dove,
So, wing'd with fear, Parthenia flies from love.

DIONE.

If in these vales the fatal beauty stray,
From the cold marble rise; let's haste away.
Why lie you panting, like the smitten deer?
Trust not the dangers which you bid me fear.

LYCIDAS.

Bid the lur'd lark, whom tangling nets surprize,
On soaring pinion rove the spacious skies;
Bid the cag'd linnet range the leafy grove;
Then bid my captive heart get loose from love.
The snares of death are o'er me. Hence! beware;
Lest you should see her, and like me despair.

DIONE.

No. Let her come; and seek this vale's recess,
In all the beauteous negligence of dress;
Though Cupid send a shaft in every glance,
Though all the Graces in her step advance,
My heart can stand it all. Be firm, my breast;
Th' ensnaring oath, the broken vow detest:

Q 2

That

That flame, which other charms have power to move,
 O give it not the sacred name of love!
 'Tis perjury, fraud, and meditated lyes.
 Love's seated in the soul, and never dies.
 What then avail her charms? My constant heart
 Shall gaze secure, and mock a second dart.

LYCIDAS.

But you perhaps a happier fate have found,
 And the same hand that gave, now heals the wound.
 Or art thou left abandon'd and forlorn,
 A wretch, like me, the sport of pride and scorn?

DIONE.

O tell me, shepherd, hath thy faithless maid,
 False to her vow, thy flatter'd hope betray'd?
 Did her smooth speech engage thee to believe?
 Did she protest and swear, and then deceive?
 Such are the pangs I feel!

LYCIDAS.

—The haughty fair
 Contemns my sufferings, and disdains to hear.
 Let meaner Beauties, learn'd in female snares,
 Entice the swain with half-consenting airs;
 Such vulgar arts ne'er aid her conquering eyes,
 And yet, where'er she turns, a lover sighs.
 Vain is the steady constancy you boast;
 All other love at sight of her is lost.

DIONE.

True constancy no time, no power, can move.
 He that hath known to change, ne'er knew to love.

Though

Though the dear author of my hapless flame
 Pursue another; still my heart's the same.
 Am I for ever left? (excuse these tears)
 May your kind friendship soften all my cares!

LYCIDAS.

What comfort can a wretch, like me, bestow?

DIONE.

He best can pity who hath felt the woe.

LYCIDAS.

Since different objects have our souls possess'd,
 No rival fears our friendship shall molest.

DIONE.

Come, let us leave the shade of these brown hills,
 And drive our flocks beside the streaming rills.
 Should the fair tyrant to these vales return,
 How would thy breast with double fury burn!
 Go hence, and seek thy peace.

S C E N E III.

LYCIDAS, DIONE, LAURA.

LAURA.

—Fly, fly this place;

Beware of love; the proudest of her race
 This way approaches: from among the pines,
 Where from the steep the winding path declines,
 I saw the nymph descend.

Q 3

LYCIDAS

LYCIDAS.

—She comes, she comes;
 From her the passing Zephyrs steal perfumes,
 As from the violet's bank with odours sweet
 Breathes every gale; spring blooms beneath her feet.
 Yes, 'tis my fairest; here she's wont to rove.

LAURA.

Say, by what signs I might have known thy Love?

LYCIDAS.

My Love is fairer than the snowy breast
 Of the tall swan, whose proudly swelling chest
 Divides the wave; her tresses, loose behind,
 Play on her neck, and wanton in the wind;
 The rising blushes, which her cheek o'erspread,
 Are opening roses in the lily's bed.
 Know'st thou Parthenia?

LAURA.

—Wretched is the slave
 Who serves such pride! Behold Menalcas' grave!
 Yet if Alexis and this sighing swain
 Wish to behold the Tyrant of the plain,
 Let us behind these myrtles twining arms
 Retire unseen; from thence survey her charms.
 Wild as the chaunting thrush upon the spray,
 At man's approach, she swiftly flies away.
 Like the young hare, I've seen the panting maid
 Stop, listen, run; of every wind afraid.

LYCIDAS.

LYCIDAS.

And wilt thou never from thy vows depart?
 Shepherd, beware—now fortify thy heart. [*To Dione.*
[Lycidas, Dione, and Laura, retire behind the boughs.

S C E N E IV.

PARTHENIA, LYCIDAS, DIONE, LAURA.

PARTHENIA.

This melancholy scene demands a groan.
 Hah! what inscription marks the weeping stone?
 “O power of beauty! here Menalcas lies.
 “Gaze not, ye shepherds, on Parthenia’s eyes.”
 Why did Heaven form me with such polish’d care?
 Why cast my features in a mould so fair?
 If blooming beauty was a blessing meant,
 Why are my fighting hours deny’d content?
 The downy peach, that glows with sunny dyes,
 Feeds the black snail, and lures voracious flies;
 The juicy pear invites the feather’d kind,
 And pecking finches scoop the golden rind;
 But beauty suffers more pernicious wrongs,
 Blasted by envy, and censorious tongues.
 How happy lives the nymph whose comely face
 And pleasing glances boast sufficient grace
 To wound the swain she loves! No jealous fears
 Shall vex her nuptial state with nightly tears;
 Nor amorous youths, to push their foul pretence,
 Infest her days with dull impertinence.

Q 4

But

But why talk I of love? My guarded heart
 Disowns his power, and turns aside the dart.
 Hark! from his hollow tomb Menalcas cries,
 "Gaze not, ye shepherds, on Parthenia's eyes."
 Come, Lycidas, the mournful lay peruse,
 Lest thou, like him, Parthenia's eyes accuse.

[*She stands in a melancholy posture, looking on the tomb.*]

LYCIDAS.

Call'd she not Lycidas?—I come, my fair;
 See generous pity melts into a tear,
 And her heart softens. Now's the tender hour;
 Assist me, Love! exert thy sovereign power
 To tame the scornful maid.

DIONE.

——Rash swain, be wise:
 'Tis not from thee or him; from Love she flies.
 Leave her, forget her. [*They hold Lycidas.*]

LAURA.

——Why this furious haste?

LYCIDAS.

Unhand me; loose me.

DIONE.

——Sister, hold him fast.
 To follow her, is, to prolong despair.
 Shepherd, you must not go.

LYCIDAS.

——Bold youth, forbear.
 Hear me, Parthenia.

PARTHENIA.

P A R T H E N I A .

—— From behind the shade

Methought a voice some listening spy betray'd.

Yes, I'm observ'd.

[*She runs out.*]

L Y C I D A S .

—— Stay, nymph ; thy flight suspend.

She hears me not—when will my sorrows end !

As over-spent with toil, my heaving breast

Beats quick. 'Tis death alone can give me rest.

[*He remains in a fixt melancholy.*]

S C E N E V .

L Y C I D A S , D I O N E , L A U R A .

L A U R A .

Recall thy scatter'd sense, bid reason wake,

Subdue thy passion.

L Y C I D A S .

—— Shall I never speak ?

She's gone, she's gone—Kind shepherd, let me rest

My troubled head upon thy friendly breast.

The forest seems to move—O cursed state !

I doom'd to love, and she condemn'd to hate !

Tell me, Alexis, art thou still the same ?

Did not her brighter eyes put out the flame

Of thy first love ? did not thy fluttering heart,

Whene'er she rais'd her look, confess the dart ?

D I O N E .

DIONE.

I own, the nymph is fairest of her race,
 Yet I unmov'd can on this beauty gaze,
 Mindful of former promise; all that's dear,
 My thoughts, my dreams, my every wish is there.
 Since then our hopes are lost; let friendship's tie
 Calm our distress, and flighted love supply;
 Let us together drive our fleecy store,
 And of ungrateful woman think no more.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis death alone can raise her from my breast.

LAURA.

Why shines thy love so far above the rest?
 Nature, 'tis true, in every outward grace,
 Her nicest hand employ'd; her lovely face
 With beauteous feature stamp'd; with rosy dyes
 Warm'd her fair cheek; with lightning arm'd her eyes:
 But, if thou search the secrets of her mind,
 Where shall thy cheated soul a virtue find?
 Sure hell with cruelty her breast supply'd:
 How did she glory when Menalcas dy'd!
 Pride in her bosom reigns; she's false, she's vain;
 She first entices, then insults the swain.
 Shall female cunning lead thy heart astray?
 Shepherd, be free; and scorn for scorn repay.

LYCIDAS.

How woman talks of woman!

DIONE.

DIONE.

—Hence depart;

Let a long absence cure thy love-sick heart.
 To some far grove retire, her sight disclaim,
 Nor with her charms awake the dying flame.
 Let not an hour thy happy flight suspend;
 But go not, Lycidas, without thy friend.
 Together let us seek the chearful plains,
 And lead the dance among the sportive swains,
 Devoid of care.

LAURA.

—Or else the groves disdain,

Nor with the sylvan walk indulge thy pain.
 Haste to the town; there (I have oft' been told)
 The courtly nymph her tresses binds with gold,
 To captivate the youths; the youths appear
 In fine array; in ringlets waves their hair
 Rich with ambrosial scents, the fair to move,
 And all the business of the day is love.
 There from the gaudy train select a dame,
 Her willing glance shall catch an equal flame.

LYCIDAS.

Name not the Court.--The thought my soul confounds,
 And with Dione's wrongs my bosom wounds.
 Heaven justly vindicates the faithful maid;
 And now are all my broken vows repaid.
 Perhaps she now laments my fancy'd death
 With tears unfeign'd; and thinks my gasping breath
 Sigh'd

Sigh'd forth her name. O guilt, no more upbraid!
 Yes. I fond innocence and truth betray'd. [*Aside.*

DIONE and LAURA apart.

DIONE.

Hark! how reflection wakes his conscious heart,
 From my pale lids the trickling sorrows start.
 How shall my breast the swelling sighs confine!

LAURA.

O smooth thy brow, conceal our just design:
 Be yet awhile unknown. If grief arise,
 And force a passage through thy gushing eyes,
 Quickly retire, thy sorrows to compose;
 Or with a look serene disguise thy woes.

[*Dione is going out. Laura walks at a distance.*

LYCIDAS.

Canst thou, Alexis, leave me thus distressed?
 Where's now the boasted friendship of thy breast?
 Hast thou not oft' survey'd the dappled deer
 In social herds o'erspread the pastures fair?
 When opening hounds the warmer scent pursue,
 And force the destin'd victim from the crew,
 Oft' he returns, and fain would join the band,
 While all their horns the panting wretch withstand.
 Such is thy friendship; thus might I confide.

DIONE.

Why wilt thou censure what thou ne'er hast try'd?
 Sooner shall swallows leave their callow brood,
 Who with their plaintive chirpings cry for food;

Sooner

Sooner shall hens expose their infant care,
When the spread kite sails wheeling in the air;
Than I forsake thee when by danger prest.
Wrong not by jealous fears a faithful breast.

LYCIDAS.

If thy fair-spoken tongue thy bosom shows,
There let the secrets of my soul repose.

DIONE.

Far be suspicion; in my truth confide.
O let my heart thy load of cares divide!

LYCIDAS.

Know then, Alexis, that in vain I strove
To break her chain, and free my soul from love:
On the lim'd twig thus finches beat their wings,
Still more entangled in their clammy strings,
The slow-pac'd days have witness'd my despair,
Upon my weary couch sits wakeful care;
Down my flush'd cheek the flowing sorrows run,
As dews descend to weep the absent sun.
O lost Parthenia!

DIONE.

—These wild thoughts suspend;
And in thy kind commands instruct thy friend.

LYCIDAS.

Whene'er my faltering tongue would urge my cause,
Deaf is her ear, and fullen she withdraws.
Go then, Alexis; seek the scornful maid,
In tender eloquence my sufferings plead;

Of

Of flighted passion you the pangs have known;
O judge my secret anguish by your own!

DIONE.

Had I the skill inconstant hearts to move,
My longing soul had never lost my Love.
My feeble tongue, in these soft arts untry'd,
Can ill support the thunder of her pride;
When he shall bid me to thy bower repair,
How shall my trembling lips her threats declare!
How shall I tell thee that she could behold,
With brow serene, thy corse all pale and cold
Beat on the dashing billow? Should'st thou go
Where the tall hill o'erhangs the rocks below,
Near thee the tyrant could unpitying stand,
Nor call thee back, nor stretch a saving hand.
Wilt thou then still persist to tempt thy fate,
To feed her pride, and gratify her hate?

LYCIDAS.

Know, unexperienc'd youth, that woman's mind
Of shifts her passions, like th' inconstant wind;
Sudden she rages, like the troubled main,
Now sinks the storm, and all is calm again.
Watch the kind moment, then my wrongs impart,
And the soft tale shall glide into her heart.

DIONE.

No. Let her wander in the lonely grove,
And never hear the tender voice of love.
Let her awhile, neglected by the swain,
Pass by, nor sighs molest the chearful plain:

Thus

Thus shall the fury of her pride be laid ;
 Thus humble into love the haughty maid.

LYCIDAS.

Vain are attempts my passion to control.
 Is this the balm to cure my fainting soul ?

DIONE.

Deep then among the green-wood shades I'll rove,
 And seek with weary'd pace thy wander'd Love ;
 Prostrate I'll fall, and with incessant prayers
 Hang on her knees, and bathe her feet with tears.
 If sighs of pity can her ear incline,
 (O Lycidas, my life is wrapt in thine !) [*Aside*
 I'll charge her from thy voice to hear the tale,
 Thy voice more sweet than notes along the vale
 Breath'd from the warbling pipe : the moving strain
 Shall stay her flight, and conquer her disdain.
 Yet if she hear, should Love the message speed,
 Then dies all hope ;---then must Dione bleed. [*Aside*.

LYCIDAS.

Haste then, dear faithful swain. Beneath those yews,
 Whose sable arms the brownest shade diffuse,
 Where all around, to shun the fervent sky,
 The panting flocks in ferny thickets lie ;
 There with impatience shall I wait my friend,
 O'er the wide prospect frequent glances send
 To spy thy wish'd return. As thou shalt find
 A tender welcome, may thy love be kind !

[*Exit* Lycidas.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

DIONE, LAURA.

DIONE.

Methinks I'm now furrounded by despair,
 And all my withering hopes are lost in air.
 Thus the young linnet on the rocking bough
 Hears through long woods autumnal tempest blow,
 With hallow blasts the clashing branches bend;
 And yellow showers of rustling leaves descend;
 She sees the friendly shelter from her fly,
 Nor dare her little pinions trust the sky;
 But on the naked spray in wintery air,
 All shivering, hopeless, mourns the dying year.
 What have I promis'd? rash, unthinking maid!
 By thy own tongue thy wishes are betray'd!

[Laura advances.]

LAURA.

Why walk'st thou thus disturb'd with frantic air?
 Why roll thy eyes with madness and despair?

DIONE.

[Musings.]

How wilt thou bear to see her pride give way?
 When thus the yielding nymph shall bid thee say,
 "Let not the shepherd seek the silent grave,
 "Say, that I bid him live---if hope can save!"

LAURA.

Hath he discern'd thee through the swain's disguise,
 And now alike thy love and friendship flies?

DIONE.

DIONE.

Yes. Firm and faithful to the promise made,
I'll range each funny hill, each lawn and glade.

LAURA.

'Tis Laura speaks. O calm your troubled mind.

DIONE.

Where shall my search this envy'd Beauty find?
I'll go, my faithless shepherd's cause to plead,
And with my tears accuse the rival maid.
Yet, should her soften'd heart to love incline!

LAURA.

If those are all thy fears, Evander's thine.

DIONE.

Why should we both in sorrow waste our days?
If love unfeign'd my constant bosom sways,
His happiness alone is all I prize,
And that is center'd in Parthenia's eyes.
Haste then, with earnest zeal her love implore,
To bless his hours---when thou shalt breathe no more.

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

Dione lying on the ground by the side of a Fountain.

DIONE.

HERE let me rest; and in the liquid glass
View with impartial look my fading face.
Why are Parthenia's striking beauties priz'd?
And why Dione's weaker glance despis'd?
Nature in various moulds has beauty cast,
And form'd the feature for each different taste:
This fights for golden locks and azure eyes;
That, for the gloss of sable tresses, dies.
Let all mankind these locks, these eyes detest,
So I were lovely in Evander's breast!
When o'er the garden's knot we cast our view,
While summer paints the ground with various hue;
Some praise the gaudy tulip's streaky red,
And some the silver lily's bending head;
Some the jonquil in shining yellow drest,
And some the fring'd carnation's varied vest;
Some love the sober violet's purple dyes,
Thus beauty fares in different lovers' eyes.
But bright Parthenia like the rose appears,
She in all eyes superior lustre bears.

S C E N E

S C E N E II.

DIONE, LAURA.

LAURA.

Why thus beneath the silver willow laid,
Weeps fair Dione in the penfive shade?
Hast thou yet found the over-arching bower,
Which guards Parthenia from the sultry hour?

DIONE.

With weary step in paths unknown I stray'd,
And fought in vain the solitary maid.

LAURA.

Seest thou the waving tops of yonder woods,
Whose aged arms imbrown the cooling floods?
The cooling floods o'er breaking pebbles flow,
And wash the soil from the big roots below;
From the tall rock the dashing waters bound.
Hark, o'er the fields the rushing billows sound!
There, lost in thought, and leaning on her crook,
Stood the sad nymph, nor rais'd her penfive look;
With settled eye the bubbling waves survey'd,
And watch'd the whirling eddies as they play'd.

DIONE.

Thither to know my certain doom I speed,
For by this sentence life or death's decreed. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

LAURA, CLEANTHES.

LAURA.

But see ! some hasty stranger bends this way ;
 His broider'd vest reflects the sunny ray :
 Now through the thinner boughs I mark his mien,
 Now veil'd, in thicker shades he moves unseen.
 Hither he turns ; I hear a muttering sound ;
 Behind this reverend oak with ivy bound
 Quick I 'll retire ; with busy thought possess'd,
 His tongue betrays the secrets of his breast.

[*She hides herself.*]

CLEANTHES.

The skilful hunter with experienc'd care
 Traces the doubles of the circling hare ;
 The subtle fox (who breathes the weary hound
 O'er hills and plains) in distant brakes is found ;
 With ease we track swift hinds and skipping roes.
 But who th' inconstant ways of woman knows ?
 They say, she wanders with the sylvan train,
 And courts the native freedoms of the plain ;
 Shepherds explain their wish without offence,
 Nor blush the nymphs ;---for Love is innocence.
 O lead me where the rural youth retreat,
 Where the slope hills the warbling voice repeat.
 Perhaps on daisy'd turf reclines the maid,
 And near her side some rival clown is laid.

Yet

Yet, yet I love her.—O lost nymph return,
 Let not thy fire with tears incessant mourn;
 Return, lost nymph; bid sorrow cease to flow,
 And let Dione glad the house of woe.

LAURA.

Call'd he not lost Dione? hence I'll start,
 Cross his slow steps, and sift his opening heart. [*Aside.*]

CLEANTHES.

Tell me, fair nymph, direct my wandering way;
 Where, in close bowers, to shun the sultry ray,
 Repose the swains; whose flocks with bleating fill
 The bordering forest and the thymy hill.
 But if thou frequent join those sylvan bands,
 Thyself can answer what my soul demands.

LAURA.

Seven years I trod these fields, these bowers, and glades,
 And by the lessening and the lengthening shades
 Have mark'd the hours; what time my flock to lead
 To sunny mountains, or the watery mead:
 Train'd in the labours of the sylvan crew,
 Their sports, retreats, their cares and loves I knew.

CLEANTHES.

Instruct me then, if late among your race,
 A stranger nymph is found, of noble grace,
 In rural arts unskill'd, no charge she tends;
 Nor when the morn and evening dew descends
 Milks the big-udder'd ewe. Her mien and dress
 The polish'd manners of the Court confess.

LAURA.

Each day arrive the neighbouring nymphs and swains,
 To share the pastime of our jovial plains;
 How can I there thy roving beauty trace,
 Where not one nymph is bred of vulgar race!

CLEANTHES.

If yet she breathe, what tortures must she find!
 The curse of disobedience tears her mind.
 If e'er your breast with filial duty burn'd,
 If e'er you sorrow'd when a parent mourn'd;
 Tell her, I charge you, with incessant groans
 Her drooping sire his absent child bemoans.

LAURA.

Unhappy man!

CLEANTHES.

—With storms of passion tost,
 When first he learnt his vagrant child was lost,
 On the cold floor his trembling limbs he flung,
 And with thick blows his hollow bosom rung;
 Then up he started, and with fixt surprize,
 Upon her picture threw his frantick eyes,
 While thus he cry'd: "In her my life was bound,
 " Warm in each feature is her mother found!
 " Perhaps despair has been her fatal guide,
 " And now she floats upon the weeping tide;
 " Or on the willow hung, with head reclin'd,
 " All pale and cold she wavers in the wind.
 " Did I not force her hence by harsh commands?
 " Did not her soul abhor the nuptial bands?"

LAURA.

LAURA.

Teach not, ye fires, your daughters to rebel.
By counsel rein their wills, but ne'er compel.

CLEANTHES.

Ye duteous daughters, trust these tender guides ;
Nor think a parent's breast the tyrant hides.

LAURA.

From either lid the scalding sorrows roll ;
The moving tale runs thrilling to my soul.

CLEANTHES.

Perhaps she wanders in the lonely woods,
Or on the sedgey borders of the floods ;
Thou know'st each cottage, forest, hill, and vale,
And pebbled brook that winds along the dale.
Search each sequester'd dell to find the fair ;
And just reward shall gratify thy care.

LAURA.

O ye kind boughs, protect the virgin's flight,
And guard Dione from his prying sight ! [*Aside.*

CLEANTHES.

Mean while, I'll seek the shepherd's cool abodes,
Point me, fair nymph, along these doubtful roads.

LAURA.

Seest thou yon' mountain rear his shaggy brow ?
In the green valley graze the flocks below :
There every gale with warbling music floats,
Shade answers shade, and breathes alternate notes.

[*Exit Cleanthes.*

R 4

He's

He's gone ; and to the distant vale is sent,
 Nor shall his force Dione's love prevent.
 But see, she comes again with hasty pace,
 And conscious pleasure dimples on her face.

S C E N E IV.

LAURA, DIONE.

DIONE.

I found her laid beside the crystal brook,
 Nor rais'd she from the stream her settled look,
 Till near her side I stood ; her head she rears,
 Starts sudden, and her shrieks confess her fears.

LAURA.

Did not thy words her thoughtful soul surprize,
 And kindle sparkling anger in her eyes ?

DIONE.

Thus she reply'd, with rage and scorn possess.
 " Will importuning love ne'er give me rest ?
 " Why am I thus in deserts wild pursu'd,
 " Like guilty consciences when stain'd with blood ?
 " Sure boding ravens, from the blasted oak,
 " Shall learn the name of Lycidas to croak,
 " To sound it in my ears ! As swains pass by,
 " With look askance, they shake their heads and cry,
 " Lo ! this is she for whom the shepherd dy'd !
 " Soon Lycidas, a victim to her pride,
 " Shall seek the grave ; and in the glimmering glade,
 " With look all pale, shall glide the restless shade

" Of

“Of the poor swain; while we with haggard eye
“And bristled hair the fleeting phantom fly.”
Still let their curses innocence upbraid:
Heaven never will forsake the virtuous maid.

LAURA.

Didst thou persist to touch her haughty breast?

DIONE.

She still the more disdain'd, the more I prest.

LAURA.

When you were gone, these walks a stranger croft,
He turn'd through every path, and wander'd lost;
To me he came; with courteous speech demands
Beneath what bowers repos'd the shepherd bands;
Then further asks me, if among that race
A shepherdess was found of courtly grace;
With proffer'd bribes my faithful tongue essays;
But for no bribe the faithful tongue betrays.
In me Dione's safe. Far hence he speeds,
Where other hills resound with other reeds.

DIONE.

Should he come back; Suspicion's jealous eyes
Might trace my feature through the swain's disguise.
Now every noise and whistling wind I dread,
And in each sound approaches human tread.

LAURA.

He said, he left your house involv'd in cares,
Sighs swell'd each breast, each eye o'erflow'd with
For his lost child thy pensive father mourns, [tears;
And sunk in sorrow to the dust returns.

Go

Go back, obedient daughter ; hence depart,
And still the sighs that tear his anxious heart.
Soon shall Evander, wearied with disdain,
Forego these fields, and seek the town again.

DIONE.

Think, Laura, what thy hasty thoughts persuade,
If I return, to Love a victim made,
My wrathful fire will force his harsh command,
And with Cleanthes join my trembling hand.

LAURA.

Trust a fond father ; raise him from despair.

DIONE.

I fly not him ; I fly a life of care.
On the high nuptials of the Court look round ;
Where shall, alas, one happy pair be found !
There marriage is for servile interest sought :
Is love for wealth or power or title bought ?
'Tis hence domestic jars their peace destroy,
And loose adultery steals the shameful joy.
But search we wide o'er all the blissful plains,
Where love alone, devoid of interest, reigns.
What concord in each happy pair appears !
How fondness strengthens with the rolling years !
Superior power ne'er thwarts their soft delights,
Nor jealous accusations wake their nights.

LAURA.

May all those blessings on Dione fall.

DIONE.

Grant me Evander, and I share them all.

Shall

Shall a fond parent give perpetual strife,
 And doom his child to be a wretch for life?
 Though he bequeath'd me all these woods and plains,
 And all the flocks the ruffet down contains;
 With all the golden harvests of the year,
 Far as where yonder purple mountains rear;
 Can these the broils of nuptial life prevent?
 Can these, without Evander, give content?
 But see, he comes.

LAURA.

— I'll to the vales repair,
 Where wanders by the stream my fleecy care.
 Mayst thou the rage of this new flame control,
 And wake Dione in his tender soul! [*Exit Laura.*]

SCENE V.

DIONE, LYCIDAS.

LYCIDAS.

Say, my Alexis, can thy words impart
 Kind rays of hope to chear a doubtful heart?
 How didst thou first my pangs of love disclose?
 Did her disdainful brow confirm my woes?
 Or did soft pity in her bosom rise,
 Heave on her breast, and languish in her eyes?

DIONE.

How shall my tongue the faltering tale explain!
 My heart drops blood to give the shepherd pain.

LYCIDAS.

LYCIDAS.

Pronounce her utmost scorn ; I come prepar'd
To meet my doom. Say, is my death declar'd?

DIONE.

Why should thy fate depend on woman's will !
Forget this tyrant, and be happy still.

LYCIDAS.

Didst thou beseech her not to speed her flight,
Nor shun with wrathful glance my hated fight?
Will she consent my sighing plaint to hear,
Nor let my piercing cries be lost in air?

DIONE.

Can mariners appease the tossing storm,
When foaming waves the yawning deep deform?
When o'er the sable cloud the thunder flies,
Say, who shall calm the terror of the skies?
Who shall the lion's famish'd roar assuage?
And can we still proud woman's stronger rage?
Soon as my faithful tongue pronounc'd thy name,
Sudden her glances shot resentful flame:
Be dumb, she cries, this whining love give o'er,
And vex me with the teasing theme no more.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis pride alone that keeps alive her scorn.
Can the mean swain, in humble cottage born,
Can Poverty that haughty heart obtain,
Where avarice and strong ambition reign?
If Poverty pass by in tatter'd coat,
Curs vex his heels and stretch their barking throat;

If

If chance he mingle in the female croud,
Pride tosses high her head, Scorn laughs aloud;
Each nymph turns from him to her gay gallant,
And wonders at the impudence of Want.
'Tis vanity that rules all woman-kind,
Love is the weakest passion of their mind.

D I O N E.

Though one is by those servile views possess'd,
O Lycidas, condemn not all the rest.

L Y C I D A S.

Though I were bent beneath a load of years,
And seventy winters thin'd my hoary hairs;
Yet, if my olive branches dropt with oil,
And crooked shares were brighten'd in my soil,
If lowing herds my fattening meads possess'd,
And my white fleece the tawny mountain dress'd;
Then would she lure me with love-darting glance,
Then with fond mercenary smiles advance.
Though hell with every vice my soul had stain'd,
And froward anger in my bosom reign'd,
Though avarice my coffers cloath'd in rust,
And my joints trembled with enfeebled lust;
Yet, were my ancient name with titles great,
How would she languish for the gaudy bait!
If to her love all-tempting wealth pretend,
What virtuous woman can her heart defend?

D I O N E.

Conquests, thus meanly bought, men soon despise,
And justly slight the mercenary prize.

L Y C I D A S.

LYCIDAS.

I know these frailties in her breast reside,
 Direct her glance, and every action guide.
 Still let Alexis' faithful friendship aid,
 Once more attempt to bend the stubborn maid.
 Tell her, no base-born swain provokes her scorn,
 No clown, beneath the sedgy cottage born;
 Tell her, for her this sylvan dress I took,
 For her my name and pomp of Courts forsook;
 My lofty roofs with golden sculpture shine,
 And my high birth descends from ancient line.

DIONE.

Love is a sacred voluntary fire,
 Gold never bought that pure, that chaste desire.
 Who thinks true love for lucre to possess,
 Shall grasp false flattery and the feign'd cares;
 Can we believe that mean, that servile wife,
 Who vilely sells her dear-bought love for life,
 Would not her virtue for an hour resign,
 If in her sight the proffer'd treasure shine.

LYCIDAS.

Can reason (when by winds swift fires are borne
 O'er waving harvests of autumnal corn)
 The driving fury of the flame reprove?
 Who then shall reason with a heart in love!

DIONE.

Yet let me speak; O may my words persuade
 The noble youth to quit this sylvan maid!
 Resign thy crook, no more to plains resort,
 Look round on all the beauties of the Court;

There

There shall thy merit find a worthy flame,
Some nymph of equal wealth and equal name.
Think, if these offers should thy wish obtain,
And should the rustick beauty stoop to gain;
Thy heart could ne'er prolong th' unequal fire,
The sudden blaze would in one year expire;
Then thy rash folly thou too late shalt chide,
To poverty and base-born blood ally'd;
Her vulgar tongue shall animate the strife,
And hourly discord vex thy future life.

LYCIDAS.

Such is the force thy faithful words impart,
That like the galling goad they pierce my heart.
You think fair virtue in my breast resides,
That honest truth my lips and actions guides.
Deluded shepherd, could you view my soul,
You'd see it with deceit and treachery foul;
I'm base, perfidious. Ere from Court I came,
Love singled from the train a beauteous dame;
The tender maid my fervent vows believ'd,
My fervent vows the tender maid deceiv'd.
Why dost thou tremble?—why thus heave thy sighs?
Why steal thy silent sorrows from thy eyes?

DIONE.

Sure the soft lamb hides rage within his breast,
And cooing turtles are with hate possess'd;
When from so sweet a tongue flow fraud and lies,
And those meek looks a perjur'd heart disguise.

Ah!

Ah! who shall now on faithless man depend?
The treacherous lover proves as false a friend.

LYCIDAS.

When with Dione's love my bosom glow'd,
Firm constancy and truth sincere I vow'd;
But since Parthenia's brighter charms were known,
My love, my constancy and truth are flown.

DIONE.

Are not thy hours with conscious anguish stung?
Swift vengeance must o'ertake the perjur'd tongue.
The Gods the cause of injur'd love assert,
And arm with stubborn pride Parthenia's heart.

LYCIDAS.

Go, try her; tempt her with my birth and state,
Stronger ambition will subdue her hate.

DIONE.

O rather turn thy thoughts on that lost maid,
Whose hourly sighs thy faithless oath upbraid!
Think you behold her at the dead of night,
Plac'd by the glimmering taper's paly light,
With all your letters spread before her view,
While trickling tears the tender lines bedew;
Sobbing she reads the perjuries o'er and o'er,
And her long nights know peaceful sleep no more.

LYCIDAS.

Let me forget her.

DIONE.

DIONE.

O false youth, relent ;

Think should Parthenia to thy hopes consent ;
When Hymen joins your hands, and musick's voice
Makes the glad echoes of thy domes rejoice,
Then shall Dione force the crouded hall,
Kneel at thy feet, and loud for justice call :
Could you behold her weltering on the ground,
The purple dagger reeking from the wound ;
Could you, unmov'd, this dreadful sight survey ?
Such fatal scenes shall stain the bridal day.

LYCIDAS.

The horrid thought sinks deep into my soul,
And down my cheek unwilling forrows roll.

DIONE.

From this new flame you may as yet recede,
Or have you doom'd that guiltless maid shall bleed ?

LYCIDAS.

Name her no more.—Haste, seek the sylvan Fair.

DIONE.

Should the rich proffer tempt her listening ear,
Bid all your peace adieu. O barbarous youth,
Can you forego your honour, love, and truth ?
Yet should Parthenia wealth and title slight,
Would justice then restore Dione's right ?
Would you then dry her ever-falling tears ;
And bless with honest love your future years ?

LYCIDAS.

I'll in yon' shade thy wish'd return attend;
Come, quickly come, and cheer thy sighing friend.
[Exit Lycidas.]

DIONE.

Should her proud soul resist the tempting bait,
Should she contemn his proffer'd wealth and state;
Then I once more his perjur'd heart may move,
And in his bosom wake the dying love.
As the pale wretch involv'd in doubts and fears,
All trembling in the judgement-hall appears;
So shall I stand before Parthenia's eyes,
For as she dooms, Dione lives or dies.

ACT

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

LYCIDAS, PARTHENIA, *asleep in a Bower.*

LYCIDAS.

MAY no rude wind the rustling branches move;
 Breathe soft, ye silent gales, nor wake my Love.
 Ye Shepherds, piping homeward on the way,
 Let not the distant echoes learn your lay;
 Strain not, ye nightingales, your warbling throat,
 May no loud shake prolong the shriller note,
 Lest she awake; O Sleep, secure her eyes,
 That I may gaze; for, if she wake, she flies.
 While easy dreams compose her peaceful soul,
 What anxious cares within my bosom roll!
 If tir'd with sighs beneath the beech I lie,
 And languid slumber close my weeping eye,
 Her lovely vision rises to my view,
 Swift flies the nymph, and swift would I pursue;
 I strive to call, my tongue has lost its sound;
 Like rooted oaks, my feet benumb'd are bound;
 Struggling I wake. Again my sorrows flow,
 And not one flattering dream deludes my woe.
 What innocence! how meek is every grace!
 How sweet the smile that dimples on her face,
 Calm as the sleeping seas! but should my sighs
 Too rudely breathe, what angry storms would rise!

S 2

Though

Though the fair rose with beauteous blush is crown'd,
 Beneath her fragrant leaves the thorn is found;
 The peach, that with inviting crimson blooms,
 Deep at the heart the cankering worm consumes;
 'Tis thus, alas! those lovely features hide
 Disdain and anger and resentful pride.

S C E N E II.

LYCIDAS, DIONE, PARTHENIA.

LYCIDAS.

Hath proffer'd greatness yet o'ercome her hate?
 And does she languish for the glittering bait?
 Against the swain she might her pride support.
 Can she subdue her sex, and scorn a Court?
 Perhaps in dreams the shining vision charms,
 And the rich bracelet sparkles on her arms;
 In fancy'd heaps the golden treasure glows:
 Parthenia, wake; all this thy swain bestows.

DIONE.

Sleeps she in these close bowers?

LYCIDAS.

—Lo! there she lies.

DIONE.

O may no startling sound unseal her eyes,
 And drive her hence away. 'Till now, in vain
 I trod the winding wood and weary plain.

Hence,

Hence, Lycidas; beyond those shades repose,
While I thy fortune and thy birth disclose.

LYCIDAS.

May I Parthenia to the friendship owe?

DIONE.

O rather think on lost Dione's woe!
Must she thy broken faith for ever mourn,
And will that juster passion ne'er return?

LYCIDAS.

Upbraid me not; but go. Her slumbers chase;
And in her view the bright temptation place.

[Exit Lycidas.]

S C E N E III.

DIONE, PARTHENIA.

DIONE.

Now flames the western sky with golden beams,
And the ray kindles on the quivering streams;
Long flights of crows, high-croaking from their food,
Now seek the nightly covert of the wood;
The tender grafs with dewy crystal bends,
And gathering vapour from the heath ascends.
Shake off this downy rest; wake, gentle maid,
Trust not thy charms beneath the noxious shade.
Parthenia, rise.

S 3

PARTHENIA,

PARTHENIA.

—What voice alarms my ear?

Away. Approach not. Hah! Alexis there!
 Let us together to the vales descend,
 And to the folds our bleating charge attend;
 But let me hear no more that shepherd's name,
 Vex not my quiet with his hateful flame.

DIONE.

Can I behold him gasping on the ground,
 And seek no healing herb to staunch the wound?
 For thee continual sighs consume his heart,
 'Tis you alone can cure the bleeding smart.
 Once more I come the moving cause to plead,
 If still his sufferings cannot intercede,
 Yet let my friendship do his passion right,
 And show thy lover in his native light.

PARTHENIA.

Why in dark mystery are thy words involv'd?
 If Lycidas you mean; know, I'm resolv'd.

DIONE.

Let not thy kindling rage my words restrain.
 Know then, Parthenia flights no vulgar swain.
 For thee he bears the scrip and sylvan crook,
 For thee the glories of a Court forsook.
 May not thy heart the wealthy flame decline!
 His honours, his possessions, all are thine.

PARTHENIA.

If he's a Courtier, O ye Nymphs, beware;
 Those who most promise are the least sincere.

The

The quick-ey'd hawk shoots headlong from above,
 And in his pounces bears the trembling dove;
 The pilfering wolf o'erleaps the fold's defence.
 But the false Courtier preys on innocence.
 If he's a Courtier, O ye Nymphs, beware:
 Those who most promise are the least sincere.

D I O N E.

Alas! thou ne'er hast prov'd the sweets of State,
 Nor known that female pleasure, to be great.
 'Tis for the town ripe clusters load the poles,
 And all our Autumn crowns the Courtier's bowls;
 For him our woods the red-ey'd pheasant breed,
 And annual coveys in our harvest feed;
 For him with fruit the bending branch is stor'd,
 Plenty pours all her blessings on his board.
 If (when the market to the city calls)
 We chance to pass beside his palace-walls,
 Does not his hall with musick's voice resound,
 And the floor tremble with the dancer's bound?
 Such are the pleasures Lycidas shall give,
 When thy relenting bosom bids him live.

P A R T H E N I A.

See yon gay goldfinch hop from spray to spray,
 Who sings a farewell to the parting day;
 At large he flies o'er hill and dale and down;
 Is not each bush, each spreading tree his own?
 And canst thou think he'll quit his native brier,
 For the bright cage o'er-arch'd with golden wire?
 What then are honours, pomp and gold to me?
 Are those a price to purchase liberty?

DIONE.

Think, when the Hymeneal torch shall blaze,
 And on the solemn rites the virgins gaze;
 When thy fair locks with glittering gems are grac'd,
 And the bright zone shall sparkle round thy waist;
 How will their hearts with envious sorrow pine,
 When Lycidas shall join his hand to thine!

PARTHENIA.

And yet, Alexis, all that pomp and show
 Are oft' the varnish of internal woe.
 When the chaste lamb is from her sisters led,
 And interwoven garlands paint her head;
 The gazing flock, all envious of her pride,
 Behold her skipping by the Priestess' side;
 Each hopes the flowery wreath with longing eyes;
 While she, alas! is led to sacrifice!
 Thus walks the bride in all her state array'd,
 The gaze and envy of each thoughtless maid.

DIONE.

As yet her tongue resists the tempting snare,
 And guards my panting bosom from despair. [*Aside.*
 Can thy strong soul this noble flame forego?
 Must such a lover waste his life in woe?

PARTHENIA.

Tell him, his gifts I scorn; not all his art,
 Not all his flattery shall seduce my heart.
 Courtiers, I know, are disciplin'd to cheat,
 Their infant lips are taught to lisp deceit;

To

To prey on easy nymphs they range the shade,
And vainly boast of innocence betray'd ;
Chaste hearts, unlearn'd in falsehood, they assail,
And think our ear will drink the grateful tale.
No. Lycidas shall ne'er my peace destroy,
I'll guard my virtue, and content enjoy.

DIONE.

So strong a passion in my bosom burns,
Whene'er his soul is griev'd, Alexis mourns !
Canst thou this importuning ardor blame ?
Would not thy tongue for friendship urge the same ?

PARTHENIA.

Yes, blooming swain. You show an honest mind ;
I see it, with the purest flame refin'd.
Who shall compare love's mean and gross desire
To the chaste zeal of friendship's sacred fire ?
By whining love our weakness is confest ;
But stronger friendship shows a virtuous breast.
In Folly's heart the short-liv'd blaze may glow,
Wisdom alone can purer friendship know.
Love is a sudden blaze which soon decays,
Friendship is like the sun's eternal rays ;
Not daily benefits exhaust the flame,
It still is giving, and still burns the same ;
And could Alexis from his soul remove
All the low images of grosser love ;
Such mild, such gentle looks thy heart declare,
Fain would my breast thy faithful friendship share.

DIONE.

DIONE.

How dare you in the different sex confide?
And seek a friendship which you ne'er have try'd?

PARTHENIA.

Yes, I to thee could give up all my heart.
From thy chaste eye no wanton glances dart;
Thy modest lips convey no thought impure,
With thee may strictest virtue walk secure.

DIONE.

Yet can I safely on the nymph depend,
Whose unrelenting scorn can kill my friend!

PARTHENIA.

Accuse me not, who act a generous part;
Had I, like city maids, a fraudulent heart,
'Then had his proffers taught my soul to feign,
'Then had I vilely stooped to sordid gain,
'Then had I sigh'd for honours, pomp and gold,
And for unhappy chains my freedom sold.
If you would save him, bid him leave the plain,
And to his native city turn again;
'There, shall his passion find a ready cure,
'There not one dame resists the glittering lure.

DIONE.

All this I frequent urg'd, but urg'd in vain.
Alas! thou only canst assuage his pain!

SCENE

S C E N E IV.

DIONE, PARTHENIA, LYCIDAS.

LYCIDAS.

[*Listening.*

Why stays Alexis? can my bosom bear
Thus long alternate storms of hope and fear?
Yonder they walk; no frowns her brow disguise,
But love consenting sparkles in her eyes;
Here will I listen, here, impatient wait.
Spare me, Parthenia, and resign thy hate. [*Aside.*

PARTHENIA.

When Lycidas shall to the Court repair,
Still let Alexis love his fleecy care;
Still let him chuse cool grots and sylvan bowers,
And let Parthenia share his peaceful hours.

LYCIDAS.

What do I hear? my friendship is betray'd;
The treacherous rival has seduc'd the maid. [*Aside.*

PARTHENIA.

With thee, where bearded goats descend the steep,
Or where, like winter's snow, the nibbling sheep
Cloath the slope hills; I'll pass the cheerful day,
And from thy reed my voice shall catch the lay.
But see, still Evening spreads her dusky wings,
The flock, slow-moving from the misty springs,
Now

Now seek their fold. Come, shepherd, let's away,
To close the latest labours of the day.

[*Exeunt hand in hand.*]

SCENE V.

LYCIDAS.

My troubled heart what dire disasters rend?
A scornful mistress, and a treacherous friend!
Would ye be cozen'd, more than woman can,
Unlock your bosom to perfidious man.
One faithful woman have these eyes beheld,
And against her this perjur'd heart rebell'd:
But search as far as earth's wide bounds extend,
Where shall the wretched find one faithful friend?

SCENE VI.

LYCIDAS, DIONE.

LYCIDAS.

Why starts the swain? why turn his eyes away,
As if amidst his path the viper lay?
Did I not to thy charge my heart confide?
Did I not trust thee near Parthenia's side,
As here she slept?

DIONE.

—She straight my call obey'd,
And downy slumber left the lovely maid;

As

As in the morn awakes the folded rose,
And all around her breathing odour throws ;
So wak'd Parthenia.

LYCIDAS.

— Could thy guarded heart,
When her full beauty glow'd, put by the dart ?
Yet on Alexis let my soul depend ;
'Tis most ungenerous to suspect a friend.
And thou, I hope, hast well that name profest.

DIONE.

O could thy piercing eye discern my breast !
Could'st thou the secrets of my bosom see,
There every thought is fill'd with cares for thee.

LYCIDAS.

Is there, against hypocrisy, defence.
Who cloaths her words and looks with innocence !

[*Aside.*

Say, shepherd, when you proffer'd wealth and state,
Did not her scorn and suppled pride abate ?

DIONE.

As sparkling diamonds to the feather'd train,
Who scrape the winnow'd chaff in search of grain ;
Such to the shepherdes the Court appears :
Content she seeks, and spurns those glittering cares.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis not in woman grandeur to despise,
'Tis not from Courts, from me alone she flies.
Did not my passion suffer like disgrace,
While she believ'd me born of sylvan race ?

Dost

Dost thou not think, this proudest of her kind
Has to some rival swain her heart resign'd?

DIONE.

No rival shepherd her disdain can move;
Her frozen bosom is averse to love.

LYCIDAS.

Say, art thou sure, that this ungrateful fair
Scorns all alike, bids all alike despair?

DIONE.

How can I know the secrets of her heart?

LYCIDAS.

Answer sincere, nor from the question start.
Say, in her glance was never love confess'd,
And is no swain distinguish'd from the rest?

DIONE.

O Lycidas, bid all thy troubles cease;
Let not a thought on her disturb thy peace.
May justice bid thy former passion wake;
'Think how Dione suffers for thy sake:
Let not a broken oath thy honour stain,
Recall thy vows, and seek the town again.

LYCIDAS.

What means Alexis? where's thy friendship flown?
Why am I banish'd to the hateful town?
Hath some new shepherd warm'd Parthenia's breast?
And does my love his amorous hours molest?
Is it for this thou bid'st me quit the plain?
Yes, yes, thou fondly lov'st this rival swain.

When

When first my cheated soul thy friendship woo'd,
To my warm heart I took the viperous brood.
O false Alexis!

DIONE.

—Why am I accus'd?

Thy jealous mind is by weak fears abus'd.

LYCIDAS.

Was not my bosom fraught with false design?
Didst thou not plead his cause, and give up mine?
Let not thy tongue evasive answer seek;
The conscious crimson rises on thy cheek:
Thy coward conscience, by thy guilt dismay'd,
Shakes in each joint, and owns that I 'm betray'd.

DIONE.

How my poor heart is wrong'd! O spare thy friend!

LYCIDAS.

Seek not detected falsehood to defend.

DIONE.

Beware, lest blind suspicion rashly blame.

LYCIDAS.

Own thyself then the rival of my flame.
If this be she for whom Alexis pin'd,
She now no more is to thy vows unkind.
Behind the thicket's twisted verdure laid,
I witness'd every tender thing she said;
I saw bright pleasure kindle in her eyes,
Love warm'd each feature at thy soft replies.

DIONE.

DIONE.

Yet hear me speak.

LYCIDAS.

—In vain is all defence.

Did not thy treacherous hand conduct her hence?
Haste, from my sight. Rage burns in every vein;
Never approach my just revenge again.

DIONE.

O search my heart; there injur'd truth thou'lt find.

LYCIDAS.

Talk not of Truth; long since she left mankind.
So smooth a tongue! and yet so false a heart!
Sure Courts first taught thee fawning friendship's art!
No. Thou art false by nature.

DIONE.

—Let me clear

This heavy charge, and prove my trust sincere.

LYCIDAS.

Boast then her favours; say what happy hour
Next calls to meet her in the appointed bower;
Say, when and where you met.

DIONE.

—Be rage suppress.

In stabbing mine, you wound Parthenia's breast.
She said, she still defy'd Love's keenest dart;
Yet purer friendship might divide her heart,
Friendship's sincerer bands she wish'd to prove.

LYCIDAS.

LYCIDAS.

A woman's friendship ever ends in love.
Think not these foolish tales my faith command;
Did not I see thee press her snowy hand?
O may her passion like thy friendship last!
May she betray thee ere a day be past!
Hence then. Away. Thou'rt hateful to my sight,
And thus I spurn the fawning hypocrite.
[Exit Lycidas.]

S C E N E VII.

DIONE.

Was ever grief like mine! O wretched maid!
My friendship wrong'd! my constant love betray'd!
Misfortune haunts my steps where'er I go,
And all my days are overcast with woe.
Long have I strove th' increasing load to bear,
Now faints my soul, and sinks into despair.
O lead me to the hanging mountain's cell,
In whose brown cliffs the fowls of darkness dwell;
Where waters, trickling down the rifted wall,
Shall lull my sorrows with the tinkling fall.
There seek thy grave. How canst thou bear the light,
When banish'd ever from Evander's sight!

SCENE VIII.

DIONE, LAURA.

LAURA.

Why hangs a cloud of grief upon thy brows?
Does the proud nymph accept Evander's vows?

DIONE.

Can I bear life with these new pangs oppress!
Again he tears me from his faithless breast:
A perjur'd Lover first he sought these plains,
And now my friendship like my love disdains.
As I new offers to Parthenia made,
Conceal'd he stood behind the woodbine shade.
He says, my treacherous tongue his heart betray'd,
'That my false speeches have misled the maid;
With groundless fear he thus his soul deceives;
What frenzy dictates, jealousy believes.

LAURA.

Resign thy crook, put off this manly vest,
And let the wrong'd Dione stand confest;
When he shall learn what sorrows thou hast borne,
And find that nought relents Parthenia's scorn,
Sure he will pity thee.

DIONE.

—No, Laura, no.

Should I, alas! the sylvan dress forego,

Then

Then might he think that I her pride foment,
That injur'd love instructs me to resent;
Our secret enterprize might fatal prove:
Man flies the plague of persecuting love.

LAURA.

Avoid Parthenia; lest his rage grow warm,
And jealousy resolve some fatal harm.

DIONE.

O Laura, if thou chance the youth to find,
Tell him what torments vex my anxious mind;
Should I once more his awful presence seek,
The silent tears would bathe my glowing cheek;
By rising sighs my faltering voice be stay'd,
And trembling fear too soon confess the maid.
Haste, Laura, then; his vengeful soul assuage,
Tell him, I'm guiltless; cool his blinded rage;
Tell him that truth sincere my friendship brought,
Let him not cherish one suspicious thought.
Then, to convince him his distrust was vain,
I'll never, never see that nymph again.
This way he went.

LAURA.

——See, at the call of night,
The star of evening sheds his silver light
High o'er yon' western hill: the cooling gales
Fresh odours breathe along the winding dales;
Far from their home as yet our shepherds stray,
To close with chearful walk the sultry day.

T 2

Methinks

Methinks from far I hear the piping swain;
 Hark, in the breeze now swells, now sinks the strain!
 Thither I'll seek him.

DIONE.

—While this length of glade
 Shall lead me pensive through the fable shade;
 Where on the branches murmur rushing winds,
 Grateful as falling floods to love-sick minds;
 O may this path to Death's dark vale descend!
 There only can the wretched hope a friend.

[*Ex. severally.*]

ACT

A C T V.

S C E N E I.

A Wood.

DIONE, CLEANTHES (*who lies wounded in a distant part of the stage*).

DIONE.

THE moon serene now climbs th' aerial way;
 See, at her sight ten thousand stars decay:
 With trembling gleam she tips the silent grove,
 While all beneath the chequer'd shadows move.
 Turn back thy silver axles, downward roll,
 Darkness best fits the horrors of my soul.
 Rise, rise, ye clouds; the face of heaven deform,
 Veil the bright Goddess in a sable storm:
 O look not down upon a wretched maid!
 Let thy bright torch the happy lover aid,
 And light his wandering footsteps to the bower
 Where the kind nymph attends th' appointed hour.
 Yet thou hast seen unhappy love, like mine;
 Did not thy lamp in heaven's blue forehead shine,
 When Thisbe sought her love along the glade?
 Didst thou not then behold the gleaming blade,
 And gild the fatal point that stabb'd her breast?
 Soon I, like her, shall seek the realms of rest.
 Let groves of mournful yew a wretch surround!
 O sooth my ear with melancholy sound!

T 3

The

The village-curs now stretch their yelling throat,
 And dogs from distant cots return the note;
 The ravenous wolf along the valley prowls,
 And with his famish'd cries the mountain howls.
 But hark! what sudden noise advances near?
 Repeated groans alarm my frightened ear!

CLEANTHES.

Shepherd, approach; ah! fly not through the glade.
 A wretch all dy'd with wounds invokes thy aid.

DIONE.

Say then, unhappy stranger, how you bled;
 Collect thy spirits, raise thy drooping head.

[Cleanthes raises himself on his arm.]

O horrid sight! Cleanthes gasping lies;
 And Death's black shadows float before his eyes.
 Unknown in this disguise, I'll check my woe,
 And learn what bloody hand has struck the blow. *[Aside.]*
 Say, youth, ere Fate thy feeble voice confounds,
 What led thee hither? whence these purple wounds?

CLEANTHES.

Stay, fleeting life; may strength a-while prevail,
 Lest my clos'd lips confine th' imperfect tale.
 Ere the streak'd East grew warm with amber ray,
 I from the city took my doubtful way;
 Far o'er the plains I fought a beauteous maid,
 Who, from the Court, in these wide forests stray'd;
 Wanders unknown; as I, with weary pain,
 Try'd every path, and opening glade, in vain;

A band

A band of thieves, forth-rushing from the wood,
Unsheath'd their daggers warm with daily blood;
Deep in my breast the barbarous steel is dy'd,
And purple hands the golden prey divide.
Hence are these mangling wounds. Say, gentle swain,
If thou hast known among the sylvan train
The vagrant nymph I seek?

DIONE.

—What mov'd thy care,
Thus, in these pathless wilds, to search the fair?

CLEANTHES.

I charge you, O ye daughters of the grove,
Ye Naiads, who the mossy fountains love,
Ye happy swains, who range the pastures wide,
Ye tender nymphs, who feed your flocks beside;
If my last gasping breath can pity move,
If e'er ye knew the pangs of slighted love,
Show her, I charge you, where Cleanthes dy'd;
The grass yet reeking with the sanguine tide.
A father's power to me the virgin gave,
But she disdain'd to live a nuptial slave;
So fled her native home.

DIONE.

—'Tis then from thee
Springs the foul source of all her misery.
Could'st thou, thy selfish appetite to please,
Condemn to endless woes another's peace?

CLEANTHES.

O spare me; nor my hapless love upbraid,
 While on my heart Death's frozen hand is laid!
 Go, seek her, guide her where Cleanthes bled;
 When she surveys her lover pale and dead,
 Tell her, that, since she fled my hateful fight,
 Without remorse I fought the realms of night.
 Methinks I see her view these poor remains,
 And on her cheek indecent gladness reigns!
 Full in her presence cold Cleanthes lies,
 And not one tear stands trembling in her eyes!
 O let a sigh my hapless fate deplore!
 Cleanthes now controls thy love no more.

DIONE.

How shall my lids confine these rising woes? [*Aside.*

CLEANTHES.

O might I see her, ere Death's finger close
 These eyes for ever! might her soften'd breast
 Forgive my love with too much ardor prest!
 Then I with peace could yield my latest breath.

DIONE.

Shall I not calm the fable hour of death,
 And shew myself before him!—Ha! he dies.
 See from his trembling lip the spirit flies! [*Aside.*
 Stay yet awhile. Dione stands confest.
 He knows me not. He faints, he sinks to rest.

CLEANTHES.

Tell her, since all my hopes in her were lost,
 That death was welcome—— [*Dies.*

DIONE.

DIONE.

What sudden gusts of grief my bosom rend!
A parent's curses o'er my head impend,
For disobedient vows; O wretched maid,
Those very vows Evander hath betray'd.
See, at thy feet Cleanthes bath'd in blood!
For love of thee he trod this lonely wood;
Thou art the cruel authorefs of his fate;
He falls by thine; thou, by Evander's hate.
When shall my soul know rest? Cleanthes slain
No longer sighs and weeps for thy disdain.
Thou still art curst with love. Bleed, virgin, bleed.
How shall a wretch from anxious life be freed!
My troubled brain with sudden frenzy burns,
And shatter'd thought now this, now that way turns.
What do I see thus glittering on the plains?
Ha! the dread sword yet warm with crimson stains!
[Takes up the dagger.]

S C E N E II.

DIONE, PARTHENIA.

PARTHENIA.

Sweet is the walk when night has cool'd the hour.
This path directs me to my sylvan bower. *[Aside.]*

DIONE.

Why is my soul with sudden fear dismay'd?
Why drops my trembling hand the pointed blade?
O string my arm with force! *[Aside.]*

PARTHENIA.

PARTHENIA.

—Methought a noise
Broke through the silent air, like human voice. [*Aside.*]

DIONE.

One well-aim'd blow shall all my pangs remove,
Grasp firm the fatal steel, and cease to love. [*Aside.*]

PARTHENIA.

Sure 'twas Alexis. Ha! a sword display'd!
The streaming lustre darts across the shade. [*Aside.*]

DIONE.

May Heaven new vigour to my soul impart,
And guide the desperate weapon to my heart! [*Aside.*]

PARTHENIA.

May I the meditated death arrest! [*Holds Dione's hand.*]
Strike not, rash shepherd; spare thy guiltless breast.
O give me strength to stay the threaten'd harm,
And wrench the dagger from his lifted arm!

DIONE.

What cruel hand with-holds the welcome blow?
In giving life, you but prolong my woe.
O may not thus th' expected stroke impend!
Unloose thy grasp, and let swift death descend.
But if yon' murder thy red hands hath dy'd;
Here. Pierce me deep; let forth the vital tide.
[*Dione quits the dagger.*]

PARTHENIA.

Wait not thy fate; but this way turn thy eyes:
My virgin hand no purple murder dyes.

TURN

Turn then, Alexis; and Parthenia know,
'Tis she protects thee from the fatal blow.

DIONE.

Must the night-watches by my sighs be told?
And must these eyes another morn behold
Through dazzling floods of tears? Ungenerous maid,
The friendly stroke is by thy hand delay'd;
Call it not mercy to prolong my breath;
'Tis but to torture me with lingering death.

PARTHENIA.

What moves thy hand to act this bloody part?
Whence are these gnawing pangs that tear thy heart?
Is that thy friend who lies before thee slain?
Is it his wound that reeks upon the plain?
Is't Lycidas?

DIONE.

—No. I the stranger found,

Ere chilly death his frozen tongue had bound.
He said; "As at the rosy dawn of day,
He from the city took his vagrant way,
A murdering band pour'd on him from the wood,
First seiz'd his gold, then bath'd their swords in blood."

PARTHENIA.

You, whose ambition labours to be great,
Think on the perils which on riches wait.
Safe are the shepherd's paths; when sober Even
Streaks with pale light the bending arch of Heaven,
From danger free, through deserts wild he hies,
The rising smoke far o'er the mountain spies,
Which

Which marks his distant cottage; on he fares,
 For him no murderers lay their nightly snares;
 They pass him by, they turn their steps away:
 Safe Poverty was ne'er the villain's prey.
 At home he lies secure in easy sleep,
 No bars his ivy-mantled cottage keep;
 No thieves in dreams the fancy'd dagger hold,
 And drag him to detect the buried gold;
 Nor starts he from his couch aghast and pale,
 When the door murmurs with the hollow gale.
 While he, whose iron coffers rust with wealth,
 Harbours beneath his roof Deceit and Stealth;
 Treachery with lurking pace frequents his walks,
 And close behind him horrid Murder stalks.
 'Tis tempting lucre makes the villain bold:
 There lies a bleeding sacrifice to gold.

DIONE.

To live, is but to wake to daily cares,
 And journey through a tedious vale of tears.
 Had you not rush'd between, my life had flown;
 And I, like him, no more had sorrow known.

PARTHENIA.

When anguish in the gloomy bosom dwells,
 The counsel of a friend the cloud dispels.
 Give thy breast vent, the secret grief impart,
 And say what woe lies heavy at thy heart.
 To save thy life, kind Heaven has succour sent,
 The Gods by me thy threaten'd fate prevent.

DIONE.

DIONE.

No. To prevent it, is beyond thy power ;
Thou only canst defer the welcome hour.
When you the lifted dagger turn'd aside,
Only one road to death thy force deny'd ;
Still fate is in my reach. From mountains high,
Deep in whose shadow craggy ruins lie,
Can I not headlong fling this weight of woe,
And dash out life against the flints below ?
Are there not streams, and lakes, and rivers wide,
Where my last breath may bubble on the tide ?
No. Life shall never flatter me again,
Nor shall to-morrow bring new sighs and pain.

PARTHENIA.

Can I this burthen of thy soul relieve,
And calm thy grief ?

DIONE.

—If thou wilt comfort give,
Plight me thy word, and to that word be just ;
When poor Alexis shall be laid in dust,
That pride no longer shall command thy mind,
That thou wilt spare the friend I leave behind.
I know his virtue worthy of thy breast.
Long in thy love may Lycidas be blest !

PARTHENIA.

That swain (who would my liberty control,
'To please some short-liv'd transport of his soul)
Shows, while his importuning flame he moves,
That 'tis not me, himself alone he loves.

O live,

O live, nor leave him by misfortune prest:
'Tis shameful to desert a friend distress.

DIONE.

Alas! a wretch like me no loss would prove,
Would kind Parthenia listen to his love.

PARTHENIA.

Why hides thy bosom this mysterious grief?
Ease thy o'erburthen'd heart, and hope relief.

DIONE.

What profits it to touch thy tender breast,
With wrongs, like mine, which ne'er can be redrest?
Let in my heart the fatal secret die,
Nor call up sorrow in another's eye!

SCENE III.

DIONE, PARTHENIA, LYCIDAS.

LYCIDAS.

If Laura right direct the darksome ways,
Along these paths the pensive shepherd strays. [*Aside.*

DIONE.

Let not a tear for me roll down thy cheek.
O would my throbbing sighs my heart-strings break!
Why was my breast the lifted stroke deny'd?
Must then again the deathful deed be try'd?
Yes. 'Tis resolv'd.

[*Snatches the dagger from Parthenia.*

PARTHENIA.

PARTHENIA.

— Ah, hold; forbear, forbear!

LYCIDAS.

Methought Distress with shrieks alarm'd my ear.

PARTHENIA.

Strike not. Ye Gods, defend him from the wound!

LYCIDAS.

Yes. 'Tis Parthenia's voice, I know the sound.

Some sylvan ravisher would force the maid,

And Laura sent me to her virtue's aid.

Die, villain, die; and seek the shades below.

[Lycidas *snatches the dagger from Dione, and stabs her.*

DIONE.

Whoe'er thou art, I bless thee for the blow.

LYCIDAS.

Since Heaven ordain'd this arm thy life should guard,

O hear my vows! be love the just reward.

PARTHENIA.

Rather let vengeance, with her swiftest speed,

O'ertake thy flight, and recompence the deed!

Why stays the thunder in the upper sky?

Gather, ye clouds; ye forked lightnings, fly:

On thee may all the wrath of Heaven descend,

Whose barbarous hand hath slain a faithful friend.

Behold Alexis!

LYCIDAS.

LYCIDAS.

—Would that treacherous boy
 Have forc'd thy virtue to his brutal joy?
 What rous'd his passion to this bold advance?
 Did e'er thy eyes confess one willing glance?
 I know, the faithless youth his trust betray'd;
 And well the dagger hath my wrongs repaid.

DIONE. [*Raising herself on her arm.*
 Breaks not Evander's voice along the glade?
 Ha! is it he who holds the reeking blade!
 There needed not or poison, sword, or dart;
 Thy faithless vows, alas! had broke my heart. [*Aside.*

PARTHENIA.

O tremble, shepherd, for thy rash offence,
 The sword is dy'd with murder'd innocence!
 His gentle soul no brutal passion seiz'd,
 Nor at my bosom was the dagger rais'd;
 Self-murder was his aim; the youth I found
 Whelm'd in despair, and stay'd the falling wound.

DIONE.

Into what mischiefs is the lover led,
 Who calls down vengeance on his perjur'd head!
 O may he ne'er bewail this desperate deed,
 And may, unknown, unwept, Dione bleed! [*Aside.*

LYCIDAS.

What horrors on the guilty mind attend!
 His conscience had reveng'd an injur'd friend,
 Hadst thou not held the stroke. In death he fought
 To lose the heart-consuming pain of thought.

Did

Did not the smooth-tongu'd boy perfidious prove,
Plead his own passion, and betray my love?

DIONE.

O let him ne'er this bleeding victim know ;
Left his rash transport, to revenge the blow,
Should in his dearer heart the dagger stain !
That wound would pierce my soul with double pain.
[*Aside.*]

PARTHENIA.

How did his faithful lips (now pale and cold)
With moving eloquence thy griefs unfold !

LYCIDAS.

Was he thus faithful ? thus, to friendship true ?
Then I'm a wretch. All peace of mind, adieu !
If ebbing life yet beat within thy vein,
Alexis, speak ; unclothe those lids again.

[*Flings himself on the ground near Dione.*]

See at thy feet the barbarous villain kneel !
'Tis Lycidas who grasps the bloody steel,
Thy once-lov'd friend.—Yet, ere I cease to live,
Canst thou a wretched penitent forgive ?

DIONE.

When low beneath the sable mould I rest,
May a sincerer friendship share thy breast !
Why are those heaving groans ? (ah ! cease to weep !)
May my lost name in dark oblivion sleep ;
Let this sad tale no speaking stone declare,
From future eyes to draw a pitying tear.

Let o'er my grave the leveling plough-share pass,
 Mark not the spot; forget that e'er I was.
 Then may'st thou with Parthenia's love be blest,
 And not one thought on me thy joys molest!
 My swimming eyes are overpower'd with light,
 And darkening shadows fleet before my sight:
 May'st thou be happy! ah! my soul is free. [*Dies.*]

LYCIDAS.

O cruel shepherdes, for love of thee [*To Parthenia.*]
 This fatal deed was done.

SCENE THE LAST.

LYCIDAS, PARTHENIA, LAURA.

LAURA.

— Alexis slain!

LYCIDAS.

Yes. 'Twas I did it. See this crimson stain!
 My hands with blood of innocence are dy'd.
 O may the moon her silver beauty hide
 In rolling clouds! my soul abhors the light;
 Shade, shade the murderer in eternal night!

LAURA.

No rival shepherd is before thee laid;
 There bled the chafest, the sincerest maid
 That ever sigh'd for love. On her pale face,
 Cannot thy weeping eyes the feature trace

Of thy once dear Dione? With wan care
Sunk are those eyes, and livid with despair!

LYCIDAS.

Dione!

LAURA.

—There pure constancy lies dead!

LYCIDAS.

May Heaven shower vengeance on this perjur'd head!
As the dry branch that withers on the ground,
So, blasted be the hand that gave the wound!
Off; hold me not. This heart deserves the stroke;
'Tis black with treachery. Yes: the vows are broke
[*Stabs himself.*

Which I so often swore. Vain world, adieu!
Though I was false in life, in death I'm true. [*Dies.*

LAURA.

To-morrow shall the funeral rites be paid,
And these Love-victims in one grave be laid.

PARTHENIA.

There shall the yew her fable branches spread,
And mournful cypresses rear her fringed head.

LAURA.

From thence shall thyme and myrtle send perfume,
And laurel ever-green o'ershade the tomb.

PARTHENIA.

Come, Laura, let us leave this horrid wood,
Where streams the purple grass with lovers' blood;

Come to my bower. And, as we forrowing go,
Let poor Dione's story feed my woe
With heart-relieving tears.——

LAURA. [Pointing to Dione.

——Unhappy maid!

Hadst thou a parent's just command obey'd,
Thou yet hadst liv'd.—But who shall Love advise?
Love scorns command, and breaks all other ties.
Henceforth, ye swains, be true to vows profest;
For certain vengeance strikes the perjur'd breast.

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